

TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

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Executive Board
Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman
Frank Hall, Secretary

Regular Members

Richard Helmecki
Adrienne Forrest
Robert Ward
Mark J. Reeves
Frank Hall

Alternate Member

Jerri MacMillan

Unapproved

Minutes
Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 7:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 29 West Avenue - Room B

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their Regular Meeting on April 2, 2015 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Richard Helmecki
Adrienne Forrest
Mark Reeves
Frank Hall
Robert Ward

Absent Members

Jerri MacMillan
Jeffrey Lovelace

1. Call to Order

K. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Old Business:

MOTION made by R. Ward to amend the Agenda to first Discuss Beaver Activity in Viney Hill Brook Park; **SECONDED** by M. Reeves; **Voting In Favor:** R. Helmecki, K. Tucker, A. Forrest, M. Reeves, R. Ward, F. Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

K. Tucker reported that she visited Viney Hill Brook Park. Dennis Robida was also at the Preserve and K. Tucker and D. Robida hiked the Blue Trail to Quarry Pond.

K Tucker reported that the area where the bog bridges are located is totally immersed in water. K. Tucker and D. Robida hiked in the opposite direction, heading around the loop and it was observed that there was evidence of beaver activity. K. Tucker and D. Robida walked around to the Boy Scout Bridge where there was further evidence that the beavers had dammed up the area abutting Broadwalk. D. Robida returned with a large rake and he removed the debris which greatly increased the water flow.

F. Hall stated that he visited the site on April 2nd and he and D. Robida cleared some of the debris, and the water started flowing again. F. Hall noted that ideally the area should be cleared during the morning hours and he stated that most of the beaver activity has occurred in the last week since the pond started thawing.

K Tucker suggested that members visit the site and clear the area around the scout bridge and work to create a path. F. Hall stated that he would meet K Tucker at 11:00a.m on Friday, April 3rd.

K Tucker asked for volunteers to put together teams, assigning a captain with six or so volunteers per team. F. Hall stated that he would look into it.

a. **Pesticide treatments**

F. Hall distributed information on the research he conducted related to the pesticides that were mentioned in the quotes from All Habitat. One of the contracts is for Imazapyer, an herbicide application for the phragmites and Japanese Knotwood. The information on the herbicide references a non-toxic application and F. Hall reported that one of the chemicals utilized is a relatively benign, nontoxic formula. F. Hall stated, based on his research, he would recommend the utilization of this formula.

F. Hall commented on the adulticide application for mosquitos which is a Larvicide control agent. The review of a 3-year study on Vectolex conducted in Wisconsin revealed that this particular agent has few effects on “non target organisms”. The pesticides are a synthetic equivalent of Pyrethroids and are generally applied using spray technology. F. Hall reported that one of the pesticides, Bifenthrin is extremely toxic to fish, other aquatic life and bees.

F. Hall stated that it is the mission of the Conservation Commission to protect wildlife and flora. The extinction of bees has become a serious problem. The use of chemicals that are toxic to bees is not recommended. F. Hall suggested that the Commission table a vote on the All Habitat quote for use of the adulticide, until such time that members have had the opportunity to review the research. There are organic treatments for the eradication of mosquitos. F. Hall requested that K. Tucker obtain a quote from All Habitat on an organic treatment.

M. Reeves suggested that a representative from All Habitat present to the Commission.

R. Helmecki referenced the presentation made by Phil Miller, State Representative, 36th Assembly District, at the March 2015 Special Meeting of the Conservation Commission. P. Miller reported on a Bill to ban the use of Pesticides. R. Helmecki questioned if the Commission wished to move forward with the application of pesticides in the Preserves based on the testimony presented by P. Miller.

A. Forrest stated that All Habitat uses EPA and DEP approved pesticides.

R. Ward questioned if a cost benefit analysis has been conducted behind the pesticide applications in the Preserves.

MOTION made by M. Reeves to authorize All Habitat to conduct the herbicide applications as per the contract; **SECONDED** by F. Hall; **Voting In Favor:** R. Helmecki, K. Tucker, A. Forrest, M. Reeves, R. Ward, F. Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

K. Tucker stated the Commission needs to decide on the benefits of the use of pesticides.

F. Hall distributed documents related to the pesticide Bifen L/P used for tick control/removal. F. Hall reported that his research revealed that this pesticide is highly toxic to fish and aquatic organisms and moderately toxic to many species of birds and toxic to bees.

F. Hall reported that the Viney Hill Brook Preserve is an area that attracts many different bird species and that this is one of the key areas in New England where migratory birds pass through. F. Hall suggested that the Commission not adopt a blanket policy on pesticides, but evaluate each on their merits.

M. Reeves stated that he is in favor of the use of the Larvicide for mosquito control in accordance with the contract from All Habitat.

K. Tucker will speak with All Habitat and inquire if there is an organic method to treat the ticks and mosquitos.

MOTION made by R. Ward that the Commission disallow the application of the tick treatment and the adulticide on the mosquitos by All Habitat pending further review; **SECONDED** by M. Reeves; **Voting In Favor:** R. Helmecki, K. Tucker, A. Forrest, M. Reeves, R. Ward, F. Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

b. **By-Laws Modification**

The Commission conducted an extensive discussion on modifications, amendments and procedural changes to the Bylaws.

Members agreed to review the amendments and table a vote on the modifications until after the next meeting.

MOTION made by M. Reeves to nominate F. Hall as Secretary to the Conservation Commission; **SECONDED** by K. Tucker; **Voting In Favor:** R. Helmecki, K. Tucker, A. Forrest, M. Reeves, R. Ward, F. Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

c. **Discuss Doane Collins VHBP Culvert and Drainage Pipe Identification Blue Print**

M. Reeves reported that he had color maps of Viney Hill Brook Park made by Bob Doane, P.E.

Members referred to the map and an extensive discussion ensued on boundaries and landmarks along with the water sources within Viney Hill Brook Park. K. Tucker stated that the site plan is to be filed with the Town Clerk's office.

d. **Other**

F. Hall reported that he spoke with the First Selectwoman of Bethany, CT related to the beaver issue. She indicated that the beavers left the park about 3 years ago and are no longer a problem.

F. Hall reported that he spoke with Augie Pampel, Essex Tree Warden who will assist with the identification of the trees that the beavers have impacted. F. Hall distributed a copy of Proposed Tree Protection Plan (4/2/15) for review and discussion at the next meeting.

3. New Business

There was no new business.

4. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

5. Review and Approve Minutes of March 2015, the Minutes of Meeting

The following changes were suggested:

- Page 1 under Fiscal Year 2015/16: “K. Tucker stated that in a discussion with First Selectman Norman Needleman, she was informed that the modified Conservation Commission budget as presented was not approved.” **Change to:** “K. Tucker stated that in an *email* with First Selectman Norman Needleman..” s
- Page 2, third paragraph: “In 2006, the State of CT banned the use of pesticides in pre-k thru 8th grade.” **Change to:** “In 2006, the State of CT banned the use of pesticides in pre-k thru 8th grade *on school grounds*”
- Page 2, fifth paragraph: “P. Miller stated that the efforts of the supporters of this Bill have been met by the industry with ferocious attempts to foil.” **Add** to the end of the sentence the word: “*passage*”
- Page 3, 11th paragraph: “Members will further discuss at the April 2015 regularly scheduled meeting a future date to conduct a walk through Viney Hill Nature Preserve. **Change to:** “Members will further discuss at the April 2015 regularly scheduled meeting *to set a date.*”
- Page 4, second paragraph, “M. Reeves read into the record a letter which was sent to the Commission in 2011 from J. Budrow, Essex Wetlands Enforcement Officer in which he referenced” **Change to:** “M. Reeves read into the record a letter which was sent to the Commission in 2011 from J. Budrow, Essex Wetlands Enforcement Officer in which *Mr. Budrow* referenced..”
- Page 4 under Preliminary Review of ByLaws: “K. Tucker stated that the Bylaws may be made to be more restrictive but not more permissive.” **Change to:** K. Tucker stated that the Bylaws may be made more restrictive but not more permissive.”

MOTION made R. Reeves by to approve the March, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes as amended;
SECONDED by A. Forrest; **Voting In Favor:** R. Helmecki, K. Tucker, F. Hall, A. Forrest, M. Reeves;
Opposed: None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

6. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary