



TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

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Executive Board
Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jim O'Brien, Vice-Chair

Regular Members

Frank Hall
Richard Helmecki
Mark Reeves
Vacancy
Vacancy

Alternate Member

Vacancy
Vacancy

Meeting Minutes of the Essex Conservation Commission
April 13, 2023, Kitchen, 7:00 pm

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
Present: Jim O'Brien, Mark Reeves, Kay Tucker
Absent: Frank Hall, Richard Helmecki
2. Public Comments: None
3. Review and Approve March 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve, Jim O'Brien, 2nd Mark Reeves. Vote unanimous.
4. Old Business to include trail reports and management issues in town preserves:
 - A. Bushy Hill Preserve
R. Helmecki and K Tucker, on March 30, cleared accumulated sticks, mud, leaves and logs from culvert and released drainage at both ends of the pond; added caution tape to leaning tree on the Red Trail; adjusted caution tape around the hazardous hemlock; and attempted to chain saw an opening through a fallen tree trunk on this trail. Due to equipment malfunction, the task was not completed. This obstruction can be stepped over until remedied.
 - B. Canfield Meadow Woods: ELT steward Tom Soboleski caution taped a portion of Canfield Trail to alert hikers that the cracked tree, abutting, but a distance from the trail, is to be avoided. J. O'Brien walked Orange Trail today to inspect another cracked tree, as reported to him by ELT stewards. O'Brien showed a photo of the tree to commissioners who were present and reported that the tree can be cut at the base eliminating the threat to possible trail obstruction.
 - C. Viney Hill Brook Preserve: R. Helmecki, M. Reeves and K. Tucker met on March 31 to install bog bridges, newly assembled by Reeves, on Broadwalk allowing dry passage from the phragmites area toward the intersection of the drainage ditch and the Turtle Nesting area trail. Invasives, Japanese Knotweed, Autumn Olive, Bitter Sweet, were cut back and pulled from the Wildflower Meadow and around the boundary fence. The lower branches of the Spruce tree were cut to allow continuous mowing of the meadow once the vegetation is dormant. The Essex Public Works Department has agreed to perform dormant meadow mowing annually.

D. M. Reeves is working with EDPW and Clark's Custom Service to ensure that grasses are mowed and trails safely maintained throughout the growing season.

5. New Business: Elizabeth Stulga, new town resident, has been appointed to the ECC, April 10, and will be confirmed at the May town meeting.

6. Financial Report FYTD: Funds of \$6342. remain 2022-23 Budget. Expenditures to Beard Lumber for bog bridge screws and Old Saybrook Lawn and Power for chain saw repair of \$82. Remainder of budget designated to All Habitat, Inc., for phragmites and mosquito control and Clark's Custom Service for basic mowing-maintenance April-June in preserves.

7. Other

Essex Land Trust to hold walk through Canfield Meadow Woods, Deep River preserve entrance, 2:00 pm on April 15. ELT Steward Tom Soboleski will lead a 4-mile hike.

8. Adjournment: Motion from M. Reeves, second by J O'Brien. Motion passed. R. Helmecki, who had been unavoidably delayed, arrived immediately after the 7:38 adjournment.

Next Scheduled Meeting May 11, 2023, Kitchen, 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Tucker, Clerk pro temp