

**TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission**

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426
Telephone (860) 767-4340 • FAX (860) 767-8509

Executive Board

*Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman
Frank Hall, Secretary*

Regular Members

*Richard Helmecki
Adrienne Forrest
Robert Ward
Mark J. Reeves*

Alternate Member

Jerri MacMillian

Unapproved

**Minutes Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 1, 2016 at 7:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 29 West Avenue - Room B**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on September 1, 2016 in Room A of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Rich Helmecki
Frank Hall
Robert Ward
Jerri MacMillian, seated for J. Lovelace
M. Reeves joined the meeting at 7:40p.m.

Absent Members

Jeffrey Lovelace
Adrienne Forrest

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary

Audience: There were no audience members present.

1. Call to Order

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

Seated for the meeting were K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, F. Hall, M. Reeves, R. Ward and J. MacMillian.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Old Business to include:

A. Trail Reports in all Preserves

Viney Hill Brook Park

F. Hall reported that he visited Quarry Pond on Monday and he observed that the trail maps need to be replenished. F. Hall stated that the Broadwalk trail is mowed and clear. The east side trail of Quarry Pond is clear of logs, however it is narrow and would benefit from some pruning and trimming. F. Hall reported that there is a fallen tree on the east side that has not yet been taken down and it is about three feet off the ground. F. Hall stated that the tree is low

enough so that the commissioners could take it down. K Tucker will contact A. Pampel, Tree Warden and inquire if the Town Crew will handle the removal of the tree.

F. Hall stated the beavers have chewed half way through a tree that is 40-50-feet in height and one foot in diameter, in the vicinity of the pond. F. Hall stated that when it goes down, it appears that the tree will fall in the pond. F. Hall stated that the status of the water level in the pond is due to the lack of adequate rainfall and he noted that there is minimal water going out of the main drain. F. Hall stated that the exclusion fence is working fine and that there was no debris in the area of the exclusion fence.

R. Helmecki asked if the commissioners were interested in wrapping some of the trees with a screening material.

F. Hall stated that there are really not that many trees that the beavers are interested in.

M. Reeves questioned if there are any trees that are important enough to preserve and stated that he would support the process of wrapping those trees.

F. Hall stated that the beavers appear to like Birch trees, however their selection process also appears to be random.

M. Reeves commented on the felled tree in the vicinity of the main drain, and stated that he would take his chain saw and cut up the tree. He previously pruned the branches, leaving only the main trunks.

Canfield Meadow Woods

R. Ward reported that he cut up a tree off of the path at Book Hill Road, as you go south to the trail head, and he noted that the gravel steps have been washed out. R Ward stated that the commissioners can handle the repair work, utilizing a wheel barrow and a few loads of dirt. R. Ward reported that the long trail that goes toward Deep River is washed out. K. Tucker stated that Roger Field and George Wendell, both members of the Essex Land Trust, are stewards for this Preserve and they walk the trails of Canfield Meadow Woods every morning.

K Tucker suggested that R. Ward enlist G. Wendell and R. Field to assist with the repair of the steps. R. Helmecki, M. Reeves and F. Hall stated that they would like to assist with the repair. R. Ward stated that it should take a few hours to complete this repair.

Bushy Hill Preserve

R. Helmecki walked all of the trails and he reported that they all looked good. R. Helmecki stated that there was no water flowing and that all of the streams have dried up.

K. Tucker reported that in the vicinity of the entrance to Bushy Hill, there is a man-made pond to the right of the entrance, and that there is a good deal of dead wood. The area is usually wet, however as a result of minimal rainfall this summer, the area is dry. K. Tucker stated that she spoke with J. Budrow, Wetlands Enforcement Officer and he agreed that this would be a good time to go in and clear up the dead wood.

Members agreed to meet on site, Tuesday, September 6th at 5:00 p.m.

R. Helmecki stated that the two abandoned bridges should be taken down, however this project can wait until the weather is cooler.

K. Tucker stated that she emailed Clark Custom Services in July and informed Ben Clark that the Commission wished to contract for the completion of Phase 1. However, there has been no further communication. K. Tucker stated that there is \$1050 in the budget to clear section one of the field, and here is \$1050 in the budget to complete Phase 2, which is to clear the other half of the open meadow, and there is \$750 in the budget to complete Phase 3, which is to move, restack and relocate the logs. R. Helmecki will follow up with the Clark Brothers. R. Helmecki will also follow up with N. Needleman to request additional funding.

K. Tucker reported on a bill received from Clark's Custom Services, for the 2015/16 fiscal year. The bill was for mowing Bushy Hill on 6/3 and Viney Hill Brook Park on 6/17/2016. The Commission encumbered \$1,100 for All Habitat, for phragmite and Knotweed control. The Commission authorized \$400 for mowing in Bushy Hill Preserve on July 15, 2016 and July 29, 2016 and also authorized \$600 for mowing services on 7/22. The Commission received another bill from Clark's Custom Services for Viney Hill Brook Preserve in the amount of \$600 and a bill in the amount of \$400 for work in Bushy Hill Preserve on August 11th and on August 25th. K. Tucker stated that the Commission has not yet received a bill from Wilcox for tree services.

K. Tucker reported that the August 4th work party which was to meet at the Viney Hill Brook passive area was cancelled due to the unavailability of commission members.

B. Schedule Trail Maintenance

Members agreed to meet at Bushy Hill Preserve, at the man made pond on Tuesday, September 6 at 5:00 p.m. to clear the dead wood and debris.

C. Other

There was no other business.

4. New Business

K. Tucker commented on a draft of the Town Report that she previously emailed to members. Amendments were suggested and a **MOTION** made by M. Reeves to made to submit the Town Report as amended; **SECONDED:** R. Ward; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, M. Reeves, R Ward, F. Hall, J. MacMillian; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/1.

K. Tucker reported on information related to Town-owned, open space on Ebony Lane that she received from N. Needleman, First Selectman and J. Guskowski, Town Planner. J. Guskowski stated that he is looking into the logistics of this open space and indicated that R. Russo, Park and Recreation Chair should also be notified as Clark's Pond is within the purview of the Park and Rec Commission. The Ivory Glen Homeowner's Association deeded an open space right of way over Clark's Pond Land from the open space to Ebony Lane. Although deeded to the Town, N Needleman indicated that it should not have been. It was supposed to be a common area for the subdivision. However, now that the Town owns the open space, they will work on a plan to deed it back to the residents.

5. Review and Approve the July 7, 2016 Minutes

MOTION made by M. Reeves to approve the July 7, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following amendment; Page 3, third paragraph, correct the spelling of the word "*Conservation*". **SECONDED:** J. MacMillian **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, M. Reeves, R Ward, F. Hall, J. MacMillian; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

6. Correspondence

- The Habitat, Fall 2016 edition.

- R. Helmecki commented on the lack of gypsy moth eggs in Canfield Meadow Woods.

R. Ward stated that the Preserve is full of them.

M. Reeves stated that there are areas that are infested and others that have come out of this season unscathed.

- Email from the Old Saybrook Land Trust stating that they are closing the Red Trail in the Preserve for ten days.

7. Adjournment

MOTION made by J. MacMillian to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:35pm to the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be conducted on October 6, 2016 at 7:30pm, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT; **SECONDED** by R. Helmecki; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, M. Reeves, R Ward, F. Hall, J. MacMillian; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary