

TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426
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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*

Alternate Member

Jerri MacMillian

Unapproved

**Minutes Regular Meeting
Thursday, June 8, 2017 at 7:30 P.M.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on June 8, 2017 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Jeffrey Lovelace
Adrienne Forrest
Frank Hall
Mark Reeves
Richard Helmecki arrived at 7:32pm

Absent Members

Robert Ward
Jerri MacMillian

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary

Audience: There were no audience members.

1. Call to Order

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

Seated for the meeting were K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment

3. Old Business to include:

a. Preserve Reports

- Viney Hill Brook Preserve

1. Blockage of Culvert below Right of Way Road Cedar Grove Terrace

A Forrest, M Reeves, K Tucker, F Hall and Dennis Robida, abutting neighbor visited the Cedar Grove Terrace in the area of the Right-of-Way Road on May 21, 2017. Mr. Robida showed the members the blockage in the

culvert in the pond abutting the Right-of Way Road. D Robida stated that he routinely clears and cleans the culvert, extracting sticks and debris that the beavers have collected. Members walked to the far side of the pond and also viewed the flooding at the Broadwalk trail. M Reeves noted that the bottom of the bog bridge was chewed by the beavers. A Forrest stated that Broadwalk trail may not be passable at any time in the near future and questioned if the Commission wished to expend money on the replenishment of maps as the beaver activity has changed the topography to the point that there are ponds where there once was hiking trails. This topic was further discussed under New Business.

M Reeves stated that the walk with D Robida was insightful as they traversed the area abutting Old Quarry Pond trail and he noted that there have been excessive amounts of rain which led to the accumulation of a good deal of water in the vernal pool across from Quarry Pond. M Reeves stated that he would like to empty the pond and it can then be better determined where the water is coming in.

K Tucker stated that as per the December report from Mike Callahan, Beaver Solutions, LLC, the beavers have their kits in May and early June and there is only one breeding female per lodge.

2. Request Town Funds for Beaver Management

K Tucker stated that she forwarded a draft letter on June 8, 2017 to the Essex Board of Selectmen requesting funds in the amount of \$1990 toward remediation of the blockage of the culvert located under the Right of Way Road, Viney Hill Brook Preserve, Cedar Grove Extension. Beaver Solutions, LLC will install a Keystone Fence and Flexible Pond Leveler. Once the installation has been completed the on-going annual expense for maintenance and inspection should be \$330. Upon approval and release of the funds, the Conservation Commission will contract with Michael Callahan, President of Beaver Solutions, LLC and petition the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission for authorization to work within their regulated area.

MOTION made by M Reeves to send a support letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting funds for installation of Keystone Fence and Flexible Pond Leveler for remediation of the culvert located under the Right of Way Road at Viney Hill Brook Preserve, Cedar Grove Extension; **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting In Favor:** were K. Tucker, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** J Lovelace; **Approved:** 5/0/1.

3. Request Waiver of Town of Essex Land Use Application fees

K Tucker stated that the Commission will seek a waiver of fees for the Application which will be made to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission for the installation of the exclusion fencing by Beaver Solutions in the culvert located under the Right of Way Road, Viney Hill Brook Preserve, Cedar Grove Extension.

4. Discuss Flooding of and Remediation for Broadwalk

Members will meet on Sunday, June 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at passive parking area Viney Hill Brook Park to break up and clear the debris, extracting sticks and debris that the beavers have collected. Members will bring hooks, long poles (conduit pipe) and shovels.

5. Kiosk

F Hall stated that the cost and installation incurred by Timberline Homes for the kiosk at Johnson Farm was \$1800.

K Tucker suggested that the discussion on the kiosk installation to be tabled.

MOTION made by M Reeves to table discussion on the kiosk until further notice; **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting In Favor:** were K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

6. Other

There was no other business

- Bushy Hill Preserve

R Helmecki reported that he walked the Preserve one week ago and most of the trails were dry. H noted however that the invasive species, Barberry is encroaching on the left side of the Blue Trail. R Helmecki suggested weed-whacking and the application of “weed be gone” spray.

A Forrest suggested the use of white vinegar, Epsom salt and dish liquid for the eradication of the weeds.

- Canfield-Meadow Woods

There was no report.

b. Other

- Viney Hill Brook Preserve

J Lovelace reported that the ticks in Viney Hill Brook Preserve are terrible this year and he noted that there are also many ticks at Johnson Farm. J Lovelace will speak with Clark Services and ask if they have cut the grass at Viney Hill Brook Park and if so, the cost for this service.

4. New Business to include:

a. Discuss Reconfiguration of Viney Hill Brook Park Trail Maps

Members discussed the flooding of the Broadwalk trail and noted that it will be impassible from passive parking area toward turtle observatory.

M Reeves suggested an insert for the trail maps with a disclaimer which states that the normal walking trail may be re-routed as a result of the temporary flooding due to beaver activity. K Tucker suggested that M. Reeves have this placed on the Town’s website with the notation that hikers may find detouring necessary rather than including an insert in the trail maps.

Members will continue discussions on alternative options for advertising detours in the trails created by the flooding.

K Tucker stated that she spoke with Norm Needleman who informed her that James O’Brien will be appointed to the Conservation Commission as an alternate in an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting.

b. Other

There was no other business.

5. Financial Report

K Tucker reported on the following encumbered monies: Annual fee to Shirley Malcarne in the amount of \$60.00; The Commission contracted with All Habitat Services for the adulticide inspection and treatment in the

amount of \$500; Phragmite and Knotweed removal along with the DEEP Permit and application is \$1,650, with an additional \$300 to cut the weeds, for a total of \$2450 of encumbered monies.

6. Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by M Reeves to approve the May 11, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented; **SECONDED** by R Helmecki; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** J Lovelace; **Approved:** 5/0/1.

7. Inland/Wetlands Report

J Lovelace reported that Tim Reynolds Essex Meadows Plant Manager requested a Permit from the IWWC for the installation of a fence and pipe flow device by Beaver Solutions, LLC. J Budrow, Wetlands Enforcement Officer was authorized by the IWWC to administratively handle this the Essex Meadows application.

8. Correspondence

K Tucker reported on the updated inventory list of the conservation easements created by Shirley Malcarne. There was a quit claim of property to the Town of Essex from Viney Hill Properties, LLC for two parcels of open space and land for emergency access to adjacent property on Hunter's Trail Extension. And, a second easement to grant passage for emergency and fire access as part of the subdivision of Edward and Roberta Cook on Hunter's Trail Extension. Gregory and Ann Peterson granted an easement to the Town of Essex in order to extend Rosewood Lane in Woodwind Subdivision. Elaine Letour granted an easement to the Town of Essex to 36 Mack Lane for driveway and septic system. A trustee deed from Anderson and Anderson to the Essex Land Trust for 17.80 acres on Navy Lane. The Town paid \$178,000 for the property.

9. Adjournment

MOTION made by M Reeves to adjourn the meeting at 8:55pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be conducted on July 13, 2017 at 7:30pm, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT; **SECONDED** by F Hall; **Voting In Favor:** were K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary