



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  
Adrienne Forrest, Secretary*

**Regular Members**

*Frank Hall  
Richard Helmecki  
Mark J. Reeves  
Jim O'Brien*

**Alternate Member**

*Roger Field  
Jacob Wlochowski*

**Unapproved**

**Minutes Regular Meeting  
Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 7:30.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, November 14, 2019 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

**Attending Members**

K Tucker  
J Lovelace  
F Hall  
A Forrest  
J O'Brien  
R Helmecki  
M Reeves  
R Field, Alternate

**Absent Members**

J Wlochowski, Alternate

**Audience:** There were no audience members.

**1. Call to Order**

K Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Seated for the meeting were K Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves, and Richard Helmecki. Alternate, non-voting member, R Field seated for discussion only.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comment

**3. Review and Approve October 10, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Seated for Vote on Minutes were K Tucker, J Lovelace, and R Field.

**MOTION** made by J Lovelace to approve the Minutes of the October 10, 2019 meeting as presented; **SECONDED** by R Field; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, J Lovelace, R Field; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0.

#### **4. Executive Session**

**MOTION** made by M Reeves to go into Executive Session at 7:35pm; **SECONDED** by J O'Brien; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves and R Helmecki; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

Executive Session concluded at 7:47pm.

#### **Old Business to Include:**

##### **A. Trail Reports, Maintenance and Projects**

##### **1. Bushy Hill Preserve and Oakledge Drive Access**

R Helmecki reported that he found one of the bat houses on the ground. Bat houses, Helmecki stated, should be at least 2 feet tall, have chambers at least 20 inches high by 14 inches wide, and have a landing area extending at least 3 to 6 inches below the entrance. Houses should be placed in a sunny location, facing East or South. Bats favor houses with 6-8 hours of direct sunlight, and if only partial day sun is available, morning sun is preferable. R Helmecki noted that the original location of the bat house was no longer optimal and suggested relocating the bat house to the Tulip tree standing in the large, open field.

K Tucker commented on a project to determine the age of the Wolf trees which involves using an increment borer to obtain a core sample from each tree. R Field volunteered to contact the Essex Land Trust to discuss methods for proceeding with this project.

J Lovelace reported noticing a wildlife camera attached to a tree on the Blue Trail in the area of the Bushy Hill Pond.

K Tucker reported that she walked Oakledge Drive to inspect the town's conservation easement and parking area and noted a Coldwell Banker Real Estate "for sale" sign on the property at 25 Oakledge Drive. Tucker asked if the Conservation Commission should advise the listing agency of the town's five-foot-wide pedestrian access to Bushy Hill Preserve and that 20 feet of the front yard of this property, as surveyed, is part of the conservation easement, as well. F Hall suggested sending a letter to the listing agent, providing a survey map. M Reeves added that the owners should be copied on the letter sent to Coldwell Banker.

**MOTION** made by M Reeves to authorize K Tucker to send a copy of the survey map along with a note to the real estate agency identifying the Town of Essex boundaries and right-of-way access relative to 25 Oakledge Drive; **SECONDED:** F Hall; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves and Richard Helmecki; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0;

K Tucker requested a work party reclaim the Oakledge Drive pedestrian access and install Town of Essex public access markers along the trail. Date set for Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM.

## **2. Canfield Meadow Woods**

R Field reported that 13 trees have been lost on the trails in the past two weeks due to wind. Nine trees have been cleared and the balance will be cleared in the next few days. R Field stated that the remainder of the property is in good shape.

## **3. Viney Hill Brook Preserve**

F Hall met with M Callahan, Beaver Solutions, LLC, to inspect the exclusion fence in the pond abutting the right-of-way road at Cedar Grove Terrace. Hall stated that the fence is working but that an unidentified creature has built a small ramp on the inside of the exclusion fence. M Callahan stated that the creature and ramp will not interfere with the effectiveness of the exclusion fence. F Hall reported that the area surrounding the bog bridges is completely dry and Tucker pond is very low. The exclusion fence on north side of Quarry Pond is working well. F Hall noted that the beavers have been active around Wollack Pond.

K Tucker received a proposal from All Habitat to treat the phragmites that have grown in the area just beyond the wildflower meadow. A winter dormant mow will be \$800 and an early season treatment in late May will be \$800 and a late season treatment in July for another \$800. K Tucker stated that the All Habitat proposal will be tabled and members will work as a team to remediate the phragmites.

## **B. Other**

R Field stated that an Essex Land Trust (ELT) steward, on a recent hike through Bushy Hill Preserve, noticed that the remaining Eagle Scout Bridge is in need of repair and that there were fallen trees and vegetation in the pond which could be cleared. R Field stated that the ELT offered to partner with the ECC on various projects. The ELT purchased a new tractor which might be available to the ECC for implementing projects. R Helmecki volunteered to coordinate with the Essex Land Trust steward and report back to the ECC.

## **5. New Business**

No new business.

## **6. Financial Report**

J O'Brien distributed the ECC budget spread sheet, which provides an easier and more understandable format for the financial reports. J Lovelace reviewed the July, August, and September 2019 Invoices from Clark's Custom Services.

K Tucker reported that All Habitat Services provided a recap of mosquito abatement at Bushy Hill Preserve for fiscal year 2018-2019. All Habitat detailed each of the four inspections and treatments. All Habitat's report will be e-mailed to ECC members along with proposals for Phragmites and Mosquito treatments for FY 2019-2020. K Tucker will ask All Habitat if there is an environmentally friendly tick treatment available and if the product for mosquitoes includes treatment for EEE.

## 7. Other

A discussion, initiated by J Lovelace, related to product and clothing intended to repel insects. J Lovelace commented on the product Nantucket Natural Bug Repellent (an essential oil spray for humans and horses) which he purchased from Essex Hardware and used with good results. This product contains no DEET.

F Hall reported that he purchased a shirt, pants and socks from the clothing line Insect Shield. This clothing is advertised to repel mosquitoes, ticks, ants, flies, chiggers and midges (no-see-ums), including those that can carry Lyme disease, Zika virus, malaria, West Nile virus and other dangerous insect-borne illnesses. The Permethrin treated fabric is advertised to last through 70 washes.

## 8. Adjournment

**MOTION** made by F Hall to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM. until the December 12, 2019 regularly scheduled meeting at 7:30 p.m., Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT;  
**SECONDED** by M Reeves; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves, R Helmecki; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella Caione  
Recording Secretary