



TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

Executive Board

*Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman
Adrienne Forrest, Secretary*

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

Regular Members

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

Alternate Member

*Roger Field
Jacob Wlochowski*

Unapproved

**Minutes Regular Meeting
Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 7:30pm**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2020 with an amended start time of 5:30 pm. This meeting was made available to the public via Zoom platform at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86818930228?pwd=OGh1R2JySnd6TFoweFg2WWhlZmhsZz09>

Meeting ID: 868 1893 0228 - Password: 248303

Chairman Kay Tucker welcomed everyone to the Essex Conservation Commission remote public access meeting which was conducted remotely based on the Governor's suspension of the In Person Open Meeting Requirements.

The Conservation Commission members announced themselves.

Attending Members

K Tucker
J Lovelace
F Hall
A Forrest
J O'Brien
M Reeves arrived at 5:45pm

Absent Members

R Helmecki
R Field
J Wlochowski

Staff:

Stella A Caione, Recording Clerk

Audience: No public in attendance.

1. Call to Order

K Tucker called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM. Seated for the meeting were K Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, J O'Brien. M Reeves arrived at 5:45pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment

3. Review and Approve May 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by F Hall to approve the Minutes of the May 14, 2020 meeting as presented; **SECONDED** by J Lovelace **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, J Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0. No Further Discussion.

4. Old Business to include:

A. Kiosk Installations and Maps

F Hall reported that the kiosk at Viney Hill Brook Preserve looks great and he recommended that the "tick" signage be included on the kiosk. F Hall will move "tick" signage to new kiosk.

J Lovelace shared a photo of the Bushy Hill Preserve kiosk.

K Tucker will write a thank you letter to Essex Land Trust for donating the kiosk at Viney Hill Brook Preserve.

MOTION made by J Lovelace to write a thank you letter to the Essex Land Trust for their assistance with the kiosk; **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, J Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0. No Further Discussion.

B. Trail Reports and Issues

1. Bushy Hill Preserve

a. Status of "Joists" in Falls River

K Tucker reported that she walked the Falls River area today and noticed a plank on the Bushy Hill side that has been jammed into a standing tree. The plank protrudes out into the river and lands on a boulder. K Tucker stated that this plank must be removed as a safety precaution. J Lovelace stated that he and R Helmecki visited the area with the intent of removing it and J Lovelace reported that the plank was solidly embedded into the tree. K Tucker will speak with R Helmecki and plan a return to the site to remove the plank.

K Tucker reported on a previous discussion related to the Wolf tree and noted that there are obvious dead branches and limbs. K Tucker spoke with Augie Pampel, Tree Warden, last fall. During that discussion, the tree warden stated he would have Wilcox Tree Service inspect the tree. Kay will follow-up with Augie Pampel.

b. Other

R Helmecki and J Lovelace met with Ely Clark, Clark's Custom Services, related to the clearing of the meadow. E Clark has a new piece of equipment and started clearing the previously reclaimed area.

K Tucker reported on the Red Trail within Bushy Hill Preserve which leads into the Falls River, and she noted that on the return up the hill to the area where the trail forks, there are no trail markers.

M Reeves joined the meeting at 5:45pm

3. Canfield Meadow Woods

No report.

4. Viney Hill Brook Preserve

J Lovelace walked the following trails: Quarry Pond, Broadwalk, Observation Rock, the Uplands and over to Forest Glade. Lovelace reported that the trails looked in good shape. J Lovelace inspected the Eagle Scout Bridge. He reported rot on one of the planks which will need replacing. The trails seemed to be well used and clear. J Lovelace reported that Observation rock needs clearing and the pond leveler needs some attention. Although it is still flowing, the location between the two pipes appears to be filling-in with debris.

M Reeves stated that he would try to clear it out. J Lovelace recommended utilizing a post hole digger. If commissioners cannot clear the debris, J Lovelace will contact Beaver Solutions, LLC.

K Tucker reported that there is a dead Oak tree and dead limbs leading to the right-of-way road across from the passive parking lot. Kay contacted Augie Pampel who asked that she mark the dead trees.

C. Other

There was no other business.

5. New Business to include:

A. Application to Essex IWWC for Bushy Hill Preserve Pond

The ECC applied to the Essex IWWC for permission to begin a cleanup project around the small man-made pond located a short distance from the entrance in the Bushy Hill Preserve. Cleanup would involve clearing invasive vegetation around the pond then removing deadfall and other invasives from the bottom of the pond. It is anticipated that work within the pond may commence after the water drains and dries, probably in late summer. Joseph Budrow, Essex Wetlands Enforcement Agent, is reviewing the application and when approved will issue an Administrative permit for the work to be completed. The water level in the pond has diminished. Only several inches of water currently remain.

B. Other

R Helmecki forwarded information to the ECC from Geoff Furtney, Essex Land Trust (ELT), on the two new trails with bridges that ELT is creating within the 30-acre Platt property in Bushy Hill Preserve. The ELT invited R Helmecki to walk this area with them at a later date.

A Forrest reported that bears have been cited in Centerbrook in the area of Woodland Drive and also on Book Hill Road and River Road, Essex. The CT DEEP has issued information on how to react and handle bear encounters. It was recommended that the DEEP recommendations be placed within the kiosks.

6. Financial Report

A. Current Expenditures and Projected Expenditures FYE

K Tucker reported that after all of the outstanding invoices and committed work has been paid, there is a balance remaining in the ECC budget for FY 2019-20 of around \$212. It was suggested that the balance be used to purchase bog bridge materials or for mowing. K Tucker stated that there is a good amount of invasives around the pond at Bushy Hill Preserve and she suggested that the remaining balance be utilized toward this clean-up effort. Instead, commissioners agreed to purchase materials for new replacement bog bridges.

MOTION made by F Hall to expend \$200 toward bog bridges; **SECONDED** by J O'Brien; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves, J Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0. No Further Discussion.

5. Adjournment

MOTION made by J Lovelace at 6:32 PM to adjourn until the July 9, 2020 regularly scheduled meeting; meeting site TBD; **SECONDED** by F Hall; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, A Forrest, F Hall, J O'Brien, M Reeves, J Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0. No Further Discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Stella A. Caione
Stella A. Caione, Recording Clerk