

Beacon Falls Conservation Commission
10 Maple Ave.
Beacon Falls, CT 06403



BEACON FALLS CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2013
(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Diane Betkoski called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Commissioners present: Noralie D'Amico, Michael Opuszynski, Mike Bouchard, Tanya Gutierro, Chris Wilemski

Commissioner absent: Jeff Kean

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes – January 2013 & March 2013

Motion to accept the January 7, 2013 meeting minutes: **Bouchard/Gutierro**; all aye. *Chris Wilemski and Michael Opuszynski abstained as they were not at the January 7, 2013 meeting.*

Motion to accept the March 4, 2013 meeting minutes: **Bouchard/D'Amico**; all aye. *Tanya Gutierro and Michael Opuszynski abstained as they were not at the March 4, 2013 meeting.*

4. Correspondence - none

5. Membership Update

- Code of Ethics documents – Tanya Gutierro needs to submit her signed document
She will contact Karen Wilson about signing form, possibly via fax.

6. 2013-14 Operating Budget

Receiving monthly reports on current budget (2012-2013). The year to date (non-clerical) balance remaining is \$3,300. No word on 2013-2014 budget yet.

Discussion on possible grant money available for open space land acquisition which would require a plan for any application. D. Betkoski cited a recent newspaper item about the town of Cheshire purchasing 103 acres for town open space with land acquisition funds and an unspecified grant.

M. Opuszynski commented the Conservation Commission needs to identify land parcels desired and have a plan to purchase if/when it becomes available. He suggested possibly involving other town groups that may want land for other uses and forming a joint effort.

7. Open Space Management

- Lantern Ridge Project – D. Betkoski worked on the “to do” list: to continue boundary markings, clear the parking lot and remove brush.
D. Betkoski suggesting using money in the Conservation Commission’s current budget for signage.

Tentative date set for Saturday April 27 at 9:00 AM to meet at Lantern Ridge for clean up, placing posts on the ridge, filling in spaces in between existing posts and show all current commissioners the property.

ACTION: M. Opuszynski will contact Rich Minnick to get the GPS data for Lantern Ridge.

Chris Wilemski offered take pictures of Lantern Ridge for the commission’s web site.

M. Bouchard mentioned that the ground may be wet at the time of year, and suggested appropriate footwear.

Tentative signage list: No Dumping, Open dawn to dusk (similar to signs at Matthies Park), big sign at entrance listing rules

ACTION: D. Betkoski will compile a shopping list of Lantern Ridge signage for the commissioners to review, then request a quote from Rich Minnick.

T. Gutierro asked why quads aren’t allowed on the Lantern Ridge parcel; D. Betkoski explained that per the Lantern Ridge ERT, quads would be harmful to the natural habitat of the parcel and its emphasis is on passive recreation.

8. Land Use Committee

Received an email from Rich Minnick about a Land Use Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday April 24 at 7:30. He is seeking representatives from town commissions to continue on this committee to communicate various land issues from different groups. He is looking to change the committee’s ordinance by modifying the membership to allow for a better chance for a quorum.

D. Betkoski and/or N. D’Amico will attend the April 24 meeting.

9. Outreach Planning for 2013

- Conservation Commission Website – C. Wilemski researched domain information

C. Wilemski discussed having a separate web site for the Conservation Commission with Ed Groth, the town web master, who suggested using “tiny url” as a link, but C. Wilemski found no guarantee that this link would remain the same. He explained the need to have a simpler, user friendly, more direct link to go to the Conservation

Commission's web site on the town web page, for use on outreach marketing materials and to make it easier to find in a web search.

Discussion about using the town logo, the new URL, and the recycling arrows logo on potential promotional items.

It was recommended and approved by vote for the purchase of a new URL for the conservation commission: www.beaconfallsconservation.com. The price will be \$64.48 for a 3 year registration

C. Wilemski will email this communication to Ed Groth and D. Betkoski will apprise the Board of Selectmen of the Conservation Commission's need to simplify the URL in an effort to meet its outreach goals.

Motion for C. Wilemski to procure promotional materials using an expenditure of up to \$500.00 from the Conservation Commission current budget, pending final approval of a new domain URL for the Conservation Commission web site link and pending final approval via email vote by the commissioners: Bouchard/ Opuszynski; all aye.

ACTION: C. Wilemski will provide pictures of sample promotional materials to the Conservation Commissioners for an email vote on its size, design and font.

C. Wilemski will purchase the above mentioned materials and request reimbursement from the town.

C. Wilemski disclosed that he has a web business in case there was any conflict of interest with him using this company.

- Downtown Clean up – April 13
Bob Bradley is organizing a river cleanup effort, no details.

ACTION: D. Betkoski will ask Bob Bradley for more details on the April 13 river clean up including times and locations and offer help from the Conservation Commission.

- Citizen's News editorial in recognition of Earth Day – D. Betkoski has drafted an article to be published in the April 19 issue of Citizen's News, to include the new URL link.
- Kayak/Duck Race: May 4:
A space has been reserved for the Conservation Commission; coverage will be needed from noon until 5 PM. The canoe/kayak race starts at 11:00.

Borrowing display boards from UCONN on invasive plants, D. Betkoski is coordinating arrangements for picking up the display boards. She has brochures to hand out.

T. Gutierro will help set up and man the table until 1:00.

Tables provided by C. Wilemski and D. Betkoski; canopy provided by N. D'Amico.

M. Opuszynski announced that he checked on the dates of hazardous waste collection: Southbury on April 27; Bethlehem on July 13; and Waterbury on October 19; all dates have recycling hours of 8 AM until 2 PM. This information will be posted on the web site.

10. Natural Resource Inventory –

- Speaker from UCONN-NEMO -- Chet Arnold is confirmed to speak at the June 3 meeting.

It was suggested to extend an invitation for this presentation to members of other boards and commissions.

ACTION: D. Betkoski will draft a press release for publication in the Citizen's News with information about the June 3 meeting inviting the public to the presentation by Chet Arnold.

N. D'Amico noted that she contacted Sophie Zyla about working on a species inventory at Lantern Ridge, and learned that Ms. Zyla is still working on inventories for Matthies Park. N. D'Amico invited her to make a presentation of her work at a future Conservation Commission meeting.

11. Payment of Invoice

Motion to accept Clerk Martha Melville's invoice requesting payment of \$72.50 for the March 4, 2013 meeting and associated administrative work and pay the bill as submitted: Bouchard/ Opuszynski; all aye.

12. Announcements/Adjournment

C. Wilemski noted that he updated the web site with links for recycling including DEEP sites. He added the First Selectman's statement about the economic benefit of the town's recycling program.

D. Betkoski noted she received an email notification that Rich Minnick and Liz Falzone are the contacts for the Greenway project.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 6, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM: Opuszynski/Gutierro; all aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Melville
Clerk

CC: Conservation Commission members
Board of Selectmen; Planning & Zoning, Inland Wetlands and Park & Rec Commissions