

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



BEACON FALLS CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2015
(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Diane Betkoski called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

Commissioners present: Vice Chairman Mike Bouchard, Secretary Sophie Zyla, Tanya Gutierrez, Ruth Burritt, Michael Opuszynski (arrived at 6:57)

Commissioner absent: Lori Paradis Brant

2. Approval of Minutes – June 1, 2015

The June 1, 2015 monthly meeting minutes were reviewed. The Chair noted that no corrections were needed and M. Bouchard suggested the minutes be accepted as presented at the discretion of the Chair.

3. Correspondence -

- processed PO for CACIWC membership dues renewal
- Naugatuck Valley Audubon Society flyer about a talk on reptiles and amphibians on June 17
- CT Land Conservation Council request for membership renewal

Motion to renew CT Land Conservation Council membership at \$100.00 level:
Zyla/Burritt; all aye.

4. Comments from the Public -

Chair D. Betkoski invited P&Z Chair, Kevin McDuffie to meeting; unavailable.

5. Membership Update -

- Commission Education - R. Burritt working on compiling list, getting email info on events
- Chair D. Betkoski asked if new members had signed Conflict of Interest form.

- Chair D. Betkoski noted that the existing ordinance does permit terms of commissioners to be 3 years when a new member starts; this will be good for succession planning.

ACTION: Clerk M. Melville will update the Conservation Commission roster with revised term expiration dates and distribute.

6. **Budget**

- Variance Report - no report available
- Purchase Request for Backpacks - request was not approved under FY 2014-15 budget, can order using FY 2015-16 funds - purchase on hold
T. Gutierro noted that she has the leftover backpacks from the Duck Race.

ACTION: T. Gutierro will count what she has leftover from Duck Race.

- Book purchase - Beacon Falls Public Library purchased eBooks with \$300 in Conservation Commission FY 2014-15 funds. The Conservation Commission would like circulation stats of these purchases to see how well they were received.

7. **Land Use Committee Report - no report**

M. Bouchard noted that there will be a presentation on the proposed energy park on July 7 at WRHS at 7 p.m. Members were encouraged to attend.

8. **Open Space Management**

- Open Space Preservation Fund - Ordinance Update - Status Report

Chair D. Betkoski emailed the current and proposed versions with edits of the Open Space Preservation Fund Ordinance to the commissioners; awaiting feedback. Changes include making language consistent and defining preservation and level of activity.

Motion for Chair Diane Betkoski to forward the updated ordinance on Open Space Preservation Fund with recommended changes of making language consistent and defining preservation and level of activity to the First Selectman to be presented to the Board of Selectmen and for approval at a future Town Meeting:

Opuszynski/Gutierro; no discussion; all aye.

ACTION: Chair D. Betkoski will forward the existing and proposed revised Open Space Preservation Fund ordinance to the First Selectman, with appropriate town form, to be presented at a future Town Meeting for approval.

- Open Space Deeds - Status Report - no update
- Open Space Inventory & Future Planning - Subcommittee Report - no report, no meetings

9. **Subcommittee Reports**

- Land Use (Diane Betkoski & Mike Bouchard)
Will use the presentation on the proposed energy park on July 7 at WRHS at 7 p.m. as their meeting.
- Recognition and Grants (Diane Betkoski & Ruth Burritt)
R. Burritt working on database.
Chair D. Betkoski shared a newspaper article detailing recent Aquarion grant winners for ideas of what type of projects are awarded grants.
- Open Space Inventory (Mike Opuszynski) no report
During CT Trails day with the Girl Scouts, he made a quick assessment of any maintenance required for Lantern Ridge.

ACTION: M. Opuszynski will update open space maintenance spreadsheet.

He also noted that he looked at two open space plots on Burton Road which are small natural open wooded areas. He deemed that no maintenance was required and that they were best suited for natural wildlife, not human activity.

R. Burritt noted that she was working on the Open Space Inventory database for posting to the Conservation Commission website.

- Natural Resource Inventory (Sophie Zyla) no report
S. Zyla noted that she had set salamander traps in the spring at Matthies and got more than anticipated.
Her bird program presentation last winter was well attended.
She noted that programs for families (kids and adults) go over well.
- Website (Sophie Zyla & Ruth Burritt) -
R. Burritt reported that she had contacted the town web master about getting permissions to change content on the Conservation Commission website which is under town control; awaiting response.

ACTION: Chair D. Betkoski requested that each commissioner submit a photo and short bio including why you want to be on the Conservation Commission for posting on the website.

- Outreach Activities
Chair D. Betkoski reviewed the draft yearly outreach plan of ideas provided by L. Brant.

Fall: America Recycles Day on November 15

M. Opuszynski suggested having an activity each month with a focus on schools, perhaps rotating to different schools and getting the students involved while continuing to raise recycling awareness and keep the momentum going.

Chair D. Betkoski questioned how easy it was to coordinate with the schools.

M. Opuszynski suggested sponsoring showing the movie Lorax at Laurel Ledge School.

ACTION: S. Zyla will check if Audubon has movie rights to Lorax.

Winter: February 14 Beacon Falls loves our trails: suggestion to submit photos or love notes to the Conservation Commission about why residents love the open spaces/trails. Suggestion to post to Facebook.

Chair D. Betkoski noted that the Town approved boards and commissions to have Facebook and Twitter accounts

T. Gutierro noted that there is a Facebook Conservation Commission group

ACTION: R. Burritt will look into the Facebook Conservation Commission group to ensure that it is current.

Spring: Earth Day/Arbor Day; RiverFest/Duck Race; CT Trails Weekend

Summer: June: Great American Backyard Campout, another suggested activity for families. July: Cardboard Boat Regatta

Also noted to begin discussion of a book purchase/donation to Beacon Falls Public Library annually in February or March.

10. **Payment of Invoices -**

- Clerical invoice –

Motion to accept Clerk Martha Melville's invoice requesting payment of \$42.50 for

the July 6, 2015 meeting and associated administrative work and pay the bill as submitted: **Bouchard/Gutierrez**; all aye.

11. Announcements/Adjournment

Presentation on energy park on July 7 at Woodland RHS at 7 p.m.

The regular monthly meeting on Monday, August 3, 2015 is cancelled.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Note this is the second Monday due to the Labor Day holiday.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 PM: **Bouchard/Opuszynski**; all aye.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Melville
Clerk

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