

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of March 22, 2016 at 7:00 pm
Meeting Room #3, Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

These Minutes are Subject to Approval by the Conversation Commission

In Attendance: Tom Philbrick, Mark Boland, Karlyn Sturmer
Clerk: Dawn Fried

Mr. Philbrick opened the meeting at 7:07 pm.

Mr. Philbrick served as acting Chair in Mr. Ryan's absence.

Open Discussion

Ms. Sturmer discussed the Stone Bridge property and the Clark Forest Management Plan. Ms. Sturmer thought it would be nice to extend an invitation to Jeremy Clark from Clark Forestry Services to go on the Stone Bridge site walk with the Commission and Lisa Wahle, contract biologist for DEEP. The site walk is scheduled for Sunday, April 3, 2016. The Commission would like to start the management implementation of the Stone Bridge project this summer.

Ms. Sturmer thought it would be beneficial to start including the press and the Board of Selectmen on project site walks. This would give the Conservation Commission a chance to introduce new projects to the community and spark interest.

Ms. Sturmer presented the Iroquios Community Grant Program to the Commissioners. The Commission discussed the benefits of applying for the grant. The potential funds from the grant would be used to support the Stone Bridge project; a management plan, management implementation, and educational purposes. Mr. Boland will start the application process with the assistance of the Commission as needed. Mr. Boland will contact Mr. Sibley for a model of a previous grant proposal. The application deadline is May 1, 2016.

The Commission discussed how to improve and update the Conservation website. Ms. Sturmer stated that the CC website is an outline that was started by previous Commissioners. Mr. Philbrick knows of a student at WCSU who is interested in conservation and might be able to help with the CC website in the Fall. Mr. Philbrick discussed the importance of the website representing the CC and that it should have an up-to-date dynamic presence.

There is one position open on the Conservation Commission. Mr. Ryan knows of a potential candidate. Mr. Philbrick will contact Mr. Ryan regarding the candidate and his background information.

The Commission discussed High Meadow as a priority. The Commission would like to have an assessment of High Meadow and a management plan in place. Mr. Ryan reached out to Larry Weaner, an expert on meadows, to give an assessment of the property. Mr. Weaner's proposal was focused on the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial project and the Commission felt it was not appropriate. The Commission would like to stay focused on their meadow management goals and will ask Mr. Weaner to resubmit his proposal. Ms. Sturmer also recommended getting a second opinion from a local expert to keep costs down.

Mr. Philbrick felt it was important to concentrate on these priorities:

1) High Meadow 2) CC website 3) Stone Bridge.

The Commission discussed Earth Day on April 23, 2016. Ms. Sturmer will sign-up the Conservation Commission via email. Mr. Philbrick will send out an email to the Commissioners and coordinate a schedule. Mr. Boland, Ms. Padilla and Ms. Joyce are able to volunteer. Ms. Sturmer and Mr. Philbrick will not be available. The table will be supplied by the Earth Day committee. The CC will bring tent, banner and educational pamphlets.

The next scheduled Conservation Commission meeting is Monday, May 11, 2016. Mr. Philbrick suggested the next meeting be changed to a "Special Meeting" on Tuesday, May 12, 2016 so Mr. Boland can attend. Mr. Philbrick will also reach out to the other Commissioners to ask their availability for May 12, 2016. The Commission also discussed changing the CC meetings going forward for the year and will discuss optional days with the other Commissioners.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Fried, Clerk