

Final / Approved

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, March 11, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Room #7, Parks & Recreation Department

6 Fairfield Boulevard, Wallingford, CT

Present: Carl Arsenault, Jeff Borne, Mary Heffernon, John Lathrop, Jared McQueen, Mike Miller, Brad Sammis, Dianne Saunders, and 1 member of the public.

Absent: Dianne Lendler and Erin O'Hare.

Chair Heffernon called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The following amendments were made to the February minutes:

- Add to the end of the final sentence of 2.A.2., paragraph 1, *and Kenny Michaels*.
- Change Borne to *Saunders* in the last sentence of 2.A.2.
- Delete the two sentences from 2.A.3.
- Delete *Public Works install* and add the word *installed* after *fencing* in 2.C.

Motion by Vice Chair Lathrop to approve the minutes as amended; seconded by Commissioner McQueen and approved unanimously.

2. Property Management

A. Tyler Mill Preserve – Stewards Report

1. Commissioner Saunders reported that 6 small sugar maple trees in Tyler Mill had been badly hacked by a hatchet and left standing. Chair Heffernon asked Commissioner Saunders to come up with an estimate for footbridge repairs. Commissioner Saunders also reported that the corduroy area on the green trail needs work.

2. Illegal trail making – No report

3. No other reports

B. Fresh Meadows

1. Trees of Heaven eradication

Chair Heffernon reported that Emily Picard and students from her Vocational Science class will remove the Trees of Heaven Saturday morning. She further reported that she is willing to check the bluebird boxes for cleaning out, but needs to get the proper tool. The sleeve placed around Commissioner Ryan's tree to protect it from deer needs to be loosened or removed, and she could not find the memorial stone placed by the tree. *Commissioners Saunders and Heffernon will fix the sleeve around the tree and explore the weeds for the memorial stone.* Commissioners agreed that they would like to see the bench that was removed from the area of the glacial erratic placed in the northwest corner of the butterfly meadow near the trail, wherever Public Works personnel think it would least affect the mowing of the meadow.

C. 205 Main St. encroachment – No report

D. Beseck Meadow

1. Encroachment – No report

2. Bamboo

Environmental Planner Erin O'Hare reported to Chair Heffernon that she had been told the bamboo had been cut, but not by Public Works, as expected.

E. Other Properties

Commissioners Arsenault, Lathrop and Heffernon looked at the Cliffside Rd. trail that goes up to the ridge, and agreed that a barrier could be placed at the choke point to keep ATVs from accessing the trail. *Chair Heffernon will discuss this with Rob Baltramitis at Public Works.*

3. Agricultural Science student initiative

Chair Heffernon reported that she met with Parks & Recreation Director Kenny Michaels, Risk Manager Kurt Treiber, Career & Technical Curriculum Coordinator Rob Kovi, Wildlife Biology teacher Emily Picard and three students at the potential land lab parcel between Lyman Hall and South Elm St.

Ms. Picard said she would like to have the students do water testing, litter clean-up, invasives management and work on erosion issues with the Southwest Conservation District. Those present agreed that the plan was a good one.

Chair Heffernon will check with Erin O'Hare to see if there would be any wetlands concerns.

4. Budget FY 20-21

Commissioners discussed installing an osprey platform at MacKenzie Reservoir and bat boxes at Tyler Mill, planning the previously discussed owl program as a possible online program thorough the Library this spring, and buying plants for the Grand St. pollinator garden.

5. Budget FY 21-22

Environmental Planner Erin O'Hare and Chair Heffernon met with the Mayor and the Comptroller and Assistant Comptroller, and there were no questions about the proposed budget.

The Public Hearing on next fiscal year's budget will be held online at 6:00 PM on Monday, April 12th.

The Conservation Commission's budget will be discussed online with the Town Council at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, May 4th.

Chair Heffernon asked Commissioner Saunders to devise a plan and estimated cost to make a replica of the former Tyler Mill.

6. Farmland Lease Properties Program

A. Farmland Lease Committee – No report

B. Bid Proposals for Fields 5A, Cooke Rd., 7A, Northford Rd., and 8B, Northford Rd – No Report

C. Field 7A, Northford Rd., hunter parking proposal – No report

D. Fields 7B, 7C and 7D, all on Anderson Rd. – gates

Ms. O'Hare has written to Rob Baltramitis at Public Works requesting gate repairs.

E. Several fields – compliance with lease terms – No report

7. Reports/Correspondence

A. CT Butterfly Association

On a motion by Commissioner Borne, seconded by Commissioner Miller, the Commission voted unanimously to pay the Association annual dues of \$25.

B. DEEP magazine, CT Wildlife, not at meeting

Commissioners agreed to participate in this year's *Big Event* with Quinnipiac University on Saturday, April 10th.

We will ask for 8 students to meet us at the Tyler Mill Rd. bridge to re-blaze 4 trails.

8. Next Meeting – April 8, 2021

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Arsenault, seconded by Commissioner Borne, the meeting adjourned at 6:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary J. Heffernon