

1 **APPROVED MINUTES**

2 **Wallingford Conservation Commission**

3 **Thursday, January 11, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.**

4 **Basement Conference Room, Town Hall**

5 **45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

6 **MINUTES**

7
8 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Tom Pietras; Dianne Lendler; Dianne Saunders; Jeff
9 Borne; Mark Ceneri; Mike Miller; Erin O' Hare, Environmental Planner; Cynthia Kleist, Recording Secretary;
10 Public – David Bedell.

11 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioner Carl Arsenault.

12 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

13 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

14 **A. Minutes,** Regular Meeting, Dec. 14, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

15 Chair Heffernon was not present at the Dec. 14, 2017 Meeting; 2A – 1, Line 27, the giant sign has not
16 been ordered, but an RFQ (request for quote) was put out; page 2, Tyler Mill Road repair, line 15 &16
17 should state puddle was paved over; line 20 & 21 on page 2 funding was not applied for as of December;
18 Page 5, Termini property should be "Town property behind the Termini property"; page 5, "B" should be
19 trail head not field; page 7 should be "Allnex" not "Town.

20 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Borne seconded by Commissioner Ceneri to approve the**
21 **December 14, 2017 Minutes as amended.**

22 **Vote: Unanimous**

23 **2. BYLAWS – possible revision**

24 Commissioner Lendler said she didn't understand how decisions are made here and how the Chair can
25 make decisions without the Commission voting on it. She said she couldn't point out any specific situation.
26 Commissioner Borne said the Commission usually comes to a consensus and then votes. Chair Heffernon
27 said she didn't know what type of decisions she would be making that wasn't brought in front of the
28 Commission. Commissioner Borne noted the by-laws are simple and noted the Ordinances have references
29 to the Conservation Commission. He wondered if a summary of accomplishments should be put into the
30 by-laws. Commissioner Saunders said this is noted in the CT. General Statutes that the Commission needs
31 to follow what is pertinent to Conservation Commissions and other State and Federal laws. She suggested
32 this be included in the by-laws.

1 Chair Heffernon pointed out that 2009 was the last time the by-laws were changed to reflect an increase
2 from 7 Commissioners to 9 Commissioners.

3 Commissioner Borne acknowledged new Commissioner Mike Miller who recently replaced former
4 Commissioner Jim Pyskaty who resigned. Commissioner Miller went over some of his background and the
5 letter he sent to Mayor Dickinson. He noted he has a B.S. in Geology with a minor in Environmental
6 Science. He said he has worked as a hydrologist and geologist and has worked for Integrated Industrial
7 Systems as an Environmental Compliance and Radiation Safety Officer; member of the Wallingford Fire
8 Dept. and EMT and Hazmat responder, operations level and is trail manager for part of the Quinnipiac Trail
9 for the CFPA (CT Forest and Park Association).

10 Commissioner Borne said he overlapped for many years with Commissioner Miller when he was on the
11 Land Acquisition Committee of the Sleeping Giant Park Association. He noted Commissioner Miller is Chair
12 of the Sleeping Giant Park Association group and has a lot of leadership experience and is an experienced
13 hiker.

14 Commissioner Saunders discussed Emerald Ash borer treatment for the lone wolf white ash tree in Tyler
15 Mill Preserve. She said there are three treatment options. She said the tree was found when the Stewards
16 were clearing the Interpretative Trail. *Commissioner Saunders will consult with Claire Rutledge of the CT
17 Agricultural Experiment Station.*

18 **3. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

19 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

20 1. Kiosk & replacement signage

21 Commissioner Saunders said the kiosk is up and the doors and the roof have been installed. She said the
22 sign has not yet arrived and a decision on the stain has to be made noting that it is still winter. Ms. O'Hare
23 said Parks & Recreation Director John Gawlak is holding back payment until Commissioner Saunders
24 approves the specifications. Commissioner Lendler said she plans on installing the correction signs when
25 the temperature reaches 45 degrees and over. She spoke about the parking lot at Vietnam Veterans
26 Memorial Park noting people have gotten stuck from the non-plowing of snow and there have been various
27 amounts of citizen complaints regarding this situation.

28 *Ms. O'Hare will write a letter to Parks & Recreation Director John Gawlak and Henry McCully, Public Works
29 Director, on behalf of the Commission regarding this issue.*

30 Ms. O'Hare added the RFQ on the big sign came back twice as expensive, noting she received an original
31 quote for \$400 and now the quote is \$900.

32 2. Stewards of Tyler Mill – report, D. Saunders

33 Commissioner Saunders said this has been an inactive month because of the snow. She noted a Good
34 Samaritan has been going on weekends and picking up litter on the roads and down to the bridge. She
35 mentioned the Stewards of Tyler Mill annual gathering scheduled for February.

36 3. Tyler Mill Preserve Management Planning Committee

- 1 a. Jan. 3, 9:00 a.m. – report
- 2 b. Jan. 12, 9:00 a.m. – next meeting

3 Commissioner Saunders said there has been two meeting and one is scheduled for Friday morning. She
4 said at the last meeting, the funding and the scope of work was discussed. She said she contacted Michael
5 Klemens who got in touch with her on Thursday. She said Mr. Clemens said it would cost between \$35,000
6 to \$40,000 to write the entire Management Plan. Commissioner Saunders said she looked into possible
7 funding opportunities, i.e., the New Haven Foundation, and the Quinnipiac River Fund, but found out the
8 Town would not qualify because this has to have an impact on the Quinnipiac River. She said National
9 Resources Conservation Service, (NRCS) grants are also not available.

10 Commissioner Ceneri suggested identifying 30 acres to tree harvest which won't have a big impact and pay
11 Mr. Klemens to do this study and use that money to do a real management plan. Commissioner Borne
12 spoke about Eric Hansen examining 13 wooded acres of timber in Sleeping Giant at a price of \$800. He
13 said Mr. Hansen came up with a timber value of between \$24,000 and \$28,000. Ms. O'Hare suggested the
14 Commission look at what other municipalities have done to pay for their Management Plan Study.

15 *Ms. O'Hare and Commissioner Saunders will look into this.*

16 The January 12, 2018 Management Planning Committee meeting was rescheduled to Monday, January 29
17 at 9 a.m.

- 18 4. Chipmunk study – status – No updates.
- 19 **B. Beseck Meadow** – Town signage relocation

20 Ms. O'Hare said the sign has not been relocated.

21 **C. Ferguson Woods** - cottontails

22 Chair Heffernon said there was nothing to report.

23 **D. Fresh Meadows**

- 24 1. CT Recreational Trails Program Project – construction status

25 Ms. O'Hare reported that people are using the trail. Commissioner Borne said he inspected the area on
26 January 2 and reported the pond had frozen over without snow and slush and saw 15 people ice skating.
27 He said the parking lot was in good shape and had been cleared of snow and that the trails are evolving.
28 He also said the stone trail out to the butterfly meadow looked inviting. He said he took photos and may
29 send them to John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director. Ms. O'Hare said the native plants were placed and
30 installed.

- 31 2. Rules & Regulation sign

32 Ms. O'Hare said John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, is working on the sign.

33 **E. Lufbery Park**

- 34 1. Alteration activity remediation

1 Chair Heffernon said the remediation was not done.

2 2. Request - insect pest study – nothing to report.

3 **F. Marcus Cooke Park – trail tree removal marking**

4 Chair Heffernon said there has been no response from Public Works.

5 **G. Property stewardship - D. Lendler**

6 Commissioner Lendler said the decision was made to do reports four times a year. She suggested the
7 reports be done for March. Commissioner Saunders suggested the reports be staggered. Chair Heffernon
8 asked if the Commission had agreed on using the word “guardians”. She suggested using the word
9 “monitors” which she said sounded like what the Commission would be doing. The Commission agreed to
10 use the word “monitors.”

11 Commissioner Saunders suggesting staggering the reports and assign a person a month. Commissioner
12 Lendler suggested doing reports twice a year in the spring and fall, i.e., three people do March, three
13 people do April and three people do May. Chair Heffernon agreed to this schedule. Commissioner Pietras
14 said he would monitor the open space on Main Street in Yalesville. Commissioner agreed to begin the
15 monitoring in March. Commissioner Miller said he went to the Beseck Meadow property last month and
16 described it as being a beautiful piece of property. Ms. O'Hare said she believed April would be a better
17 month to begin the monitoring. Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Saunders agreed.

18 The Commission agreed to do half the monitoring in April and half the monitoring in May.

19 **H. Other properties – Nothing to report**

20 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

21 **A. Field 4A, Whirlwind Hill Rd. & 19A, Scard Rd – maintenance – nothing to report**

22 **B. Field 6D, off Cooke Road – property boundary**

23 Ms. O'Hare said she will write a memo regarding whose monies will be spent on posts to be installed in the
24 ground per request of the Engineering Dept.

25 **C. Field 8B, Northford Road – bale removal & field edge maintainance – nothing to report.**

26 **D. Field 18A, 995 East Center Street/Tamarac Swamp Road – proposed Request for**
27 **Qualifications**

28 Ms. O'Hare said this is being delayed by the Dept. of Health. She said the lease has been extended
29 indefinitely by the Law Department.

30 **E. Mowing of three areas – Field 7E, Field 4C and 1245 Whirlwind Hill Road – no updates.**

31 **F. Farmland Committee – monitoring reports**

32 Commissioner Saunders said she will take up the fields monitored by former Commissioner Pyskaty.

1 **5.PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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3 The Commission discussed project ideas. Commissioner Lendler said there were two recommendations
4 which included blazing at Marcus Cooke and installing stone dust at the Yellow Trail. The Commission
5 reached a consensus to have the Quinnipiac students blaze the trails at Marcus Cooke Park.

6 **6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

7 **Motion: Commissioner Saunders made a motion to reappoint Mary Heffernon as Chair of the**
8 **Conservation Commission and John Lathrop as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Borne seconded the**
9 **motion which passed unanimously.**

10 **7. BUDGET FY 18-19**

11 Ms. O'Hare said the budget is the same as last year and that \$6,000 was put down for professional
12 services. The Commission discussed ideas for professional services. Chair Heffernon suggested asking for
13 more than \$6,000. Ms. O'Hare said the \$6,000 was used in the past for invasive species eradication at
14 Fresh Meadows. Ms. O'Hare noted the money was also used several years ago for mapping, and surveying
15 at Fresh Meadows by Lenard Engineering. She said the money can be split up to do several projects.

16 Other ideas discussed included possible trail work on the Yellow Trail, planting cedars at Fresh Meadows
17 and bamboo eradication and the lone wolf tree treatment. Commissioner Borne suggested improvements
18 at the Galko property, i.e., a bench and improvements to the trail down to the pond.

19 Ms. O'Hare suggested planting cedars at Fresh Meadows and planting trees in other areas. Commissioner
20 Borne suggested eradicating the phragmites down near the pond on the south side of Cheshire Road on
21 the Galko property. Ms. O'Hare went over the list which included renovating the beginning of the Yellow
22 Trail, cedars for Fresh Meadows, lone wolf tree treatment. Ms. O'Hare asked about adding a butterfly bush
23 at the Butterfly Meadow. Chair Heffernon said the Garden Club may be able to provide free plants.
24 Commissioner Saunders suggested using the Rutger's recommendation list for deer resistant plants.

25 **8. OTHER TOPICS – nothing to discuss**

26 **9. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

27 **A. Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program – application deadline 2/2/18 – nothing to**
28 **report**

29 **B. Community Lake – Parks & Recreation Dept. – IWWC application – proposed tree cutting**

30 Ms. O'Hare said the Parks & Recreation Dept. has an Inland Wetlands application for permission to clear
31 off the shrubs and tree vegetation on the west side of the dredged pond. She said the trees were marked
32 and Parks & Recreation met with Dave Smith on Monday who is drawing a scaled map. Ms. O'Hare said
33 she requested that shrubs and vegetation by the water be left in place. She said Parks & Recreation asked

1 her to tape the shrubs to be left. Commissioner Saunders said she has seen 200 geese on the soccer fields
2 at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park.

3 **C. CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commission, Inc., (CACIWC) –**
4 Conference, Nov. 18 – reports- nothing to report

5 **D. North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants Program –** matching grant
6 program for projects involving restoration/enhancement and/or establishment of wetlands and
7 associated upland habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds; deadline
8 10/19/19

9 **E. Cottontail occurrence –** status report – nothing to report

10 **F. QRWA letter** to Commission, dated 12/29/17; received 1/3/18

11 Ms. O'Hare said the letter thanked the Commission for their donation. She passed around the letter.

12 **G. DEEP magazine,** Connecticut Wildlife, Nov./Dec. 2017, received 1/10/17.

13 Ms. O'Hare reported about an article in the magazine which highlighted five bears in one den in CT
14 which included four yearlings.

15

16 **ADJOURNMENT**

17 Commissioner Borne made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 9:39 p.m. Commissioner Pietras seconded
18 the motion which passed unanimously.

19 Respectfully submitted,

20 Cynthia A. Kleist

21 Recording Secretary

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