

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

January 27, 2020
Craftsbury Town Hall

PRESENT: Stephen Moffatt, Diane Morgan, Elinor Osborn, John Broadhead, Carol Maroni, Susie Houseton, Heidi Rich,

ABSENT: Farley Brown, June Cook

MINUTES: Minutes of 12-23-2019 approved.

Meeting called to order at 7:00PM.

Steve Moffatt recognized the recent loss of Steve Wright and how much he will be missed.

Treasurer's Report: The current total in the Conservation Fund is \$2,199.34. The amount at year end which appears in the Town Report does include the \$105 which came from Antiques and Uniques volunteer donations.

Active Committees and Contact Person Designations:

Knotweed/Invasive Disposal Committee with Elinor O. as contact

Community Gardens committee with Carol M. as contact

Chimney Swift committee with Heidi R. as contact

Ash Inventory as committee with Steve M. as contact

Goals and priorities for 2020

Hosmer Milfoil Monitoring: The Commission feels it is important to continue to help keep Little Hosmer free of aquatic plant invasives. Monitoring will depend on volunteer efforts. Diane will contact Kim Jenson, Aquatic Botanist for the State, about free, one-day workshops this spring to train volunteers. Currently John Brodhead, Judy Davis, and Amelia Fritz monitor Little Hosmer. Little Hosmer is at risk from spill-over from Big Hosmer in a storm situation bringing in milfoil. Boat traffic is also a concern for introducing milfoil. In addition to monitoring, increasing public awareness is key.

It was suggested that other milfoil-free water bodies in the area be identified and included in surveillance efforts.

Industrial Wind Installation Tower Lights: The CCC will consider drafting a letter to the Public Service Board regarding a timeline for installing the promised radar monitored aviation lighting on the towers.

Knotweed Disposal: No permit needed to transport; there is an exemption for invasive control projects that meet acceptable management practices in accordance with guidelines set by the Agency of Agriculture. All knotweed would have to be properly bagged.

Disposal charges are \$75/ton to Coventry Landfill with a \$300 minimum charge.

There are many outstanding questions regarding logistics of collection of invasive and their ultimate disposal.

-Could a town dump truck be used as a collection receptacle and if so, how long could the town do without that truck?

-Could an alternate site be manned to be sure of proper disposal?

-How often could people bring invasive for disposal?

-Will people take advantage of an invasive plant disposal day?

-Where will the \$300 disposal fee come from?

Elinor offered to write up a survey form for Town Meeting to get a sense of the public's interest in having a way for people to properly dispose of knotweed removed from their property.

In addition to knotweed, it was brought up that wall lettuce is rapidly spreading. It can easily be pulled up. It produces copious seeds and should be disposed of properly. Wall lettuce can grow in a wide range of conditions and warrants attention.

It is the goal of the CCC to encourage and support people in the control of invasive species on their property.

The CCC needs to bring a recommendation for invasive plant disposal to the Select Board.

Town Meeting Preparation: The CCC will have a booth or table at Town Meeting. Details to be discussed at the next meeting.

Good Neighbor Fund Warning Preparation: There are many requests being made for the money in the Good Neighbor Fund (GNF). Stephen will present the CCC request for GNF funds with justifications. He asked for a number of examples of how other towns have spent conservation fund dollars, for his Town Meeting presentation.

Craftsbury Conservation Fund Document Flyer: Clarification is needed about the guidelines for the Craftsbury Conservation Fund. Diane shared a draft of a flyer with bullet points which will be prioritized and reviewed at the next meeting. Carol offered to work with Diane on the information sheet.

Discussion about how to answer questions regarding the Craftsbury Conservation Fund will be on next meeting's agenda.

A question was posed that if FEMA money is awarded to Craftsbury for road repairs from the Halloween storm, will the Select Board consider ceding GNF funds back to the CCC.

Ash Inventory: Doing an inventory of the ash trees on Town rights-of-way is supported by the Select Board and will happen this winter.

Other Business: There is an empty seat to fill on the CCC. Discussion of new appointments will be on next meeting's agenda.

Adjourn: 8:30 PM