

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 5/26/2022 at 7:15 P.M

Location –Westminster Institute

1. Call to Order 2 min

Present: Sarah Waldo, Ashlyn Stephens, Alma Beals, Kestrel Craig, Tatiana Schreiber, Rachael Shaw, Chuck Lawrence (Road Foreman) Jason Perry (Road Commissioner, Selectboard Chair)

2. Adjustments to Agenda: none

3. Acceptance of Minutes: 4/28/2022 - Minutes accepted by unanimous consent.

4. Communications and Public Comment: none

5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –

a) Communication from public re roadside maintenance - Reasoning for winter brush removal per Chuck is to keep brush from getting too big (and therefore way more expensive and complicated to remove), and to do so at a time when the trees are dormant and the crew has time. The machine used was a more efficient use of fuel, equipment and hours than previous use of chainsaws, chippers, traffic directors, dump trucks etc. There isn't anything that can be done about the way the blade cuts roughly. The right of way is 25 feet on either side from the center of the road. Chuck said that if landowners want to keep the town from cutting brush or grass or individual plants/shrubs/trees on our property, we should 1. call him, 2. put tape up to designate protection, 3. maintain the right of way so the town won't need to.

b) Invasive species brochure/booklet – Kestrel was able to access text and send to Tatiana. Booklet is in the finishing stage. We will need to contact Selectboard when its ready to print to remind of previous decision to provide funds.

c) Website for Conservation Commission – progress - Rachael will email Letitia Milevskiy (Town Website coordinator) and ask how to go about submitting documents for the Conservation Commission page(s).

d) Allen Marsh forum – continue planning Michelle Bos-Lun reports that John Ungerleider is willing to moderate sometime after August 15. Tatiana will ask John if any dates during the third week in August will work, and Sarah will check with Kim Royer about that week. Tatiana and Alma will write a letter (ensuring participants that it will be a welcoming environment) to the 7 landowners to invite them. We can follow up with phone calls. Other interested parties are Sevca (Kevin Brennan and a biologist colleague), the Friends of the Allen Marsh, Audubon Societies of Brattleboro and Springfield, announcement in the Gazette, other businesses nearby (the Cottage, Harlow's, Westminster Auto, Boot Camp, etc). We should have food for our event. The Institute would be an ideal location. We will need some \$ for food.

6. New Business:

a) New educational workshops – Ashlyn shared a PDF about creating pollinator houses (bee hotels), Alma is willing to host the workshop. We could do most of the planning at our June meeting; a subcommittee (Sarah, Rachael, Kestrel and Ashlyn) will help. Plan is for July 17th (a Sunday afternoon) 2:30-4:30 at Alma's house. We would need some snacks and possibly some materials for the bee hotels. Some could be pre-made and some could require finishing. Ashlyn will check in with Tom Griffiths about some materials/plans for the bee hotel structures, and look into options for keeping them safe from parasites/pathogens over the winter. One source suggests mesh bags, but not clear if these are necessary. Preference would be not to use additional synthetic materials if not needed. We will create small budget for educational events to request reimbursement from Selectboard.

b) Upcoming webinars re Town Forest management. Margo Ghia (Natural Resources Planner from the Windham Regional Commission) sent out information. It would be good if we could take turns attending

the 5 workshops, which are sponsored by the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program. Next are June 2, June 7, June 14, and June 21. One has already happened, but there should be a recording available.

c) Guidelines for Commission meetings- postponed discussion.

7. Other Business: none

8. Date of Next Meeting: June 23, 2022. Location, TBD
(Westminster West School Pavillion?)

9. Adjournment at 8:35 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rachael Shaw, secretary