



# Town of Woodbury Conservation Commission

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**WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, November 9, 2023  
7:00 p.m., – Senior Center Conference Room**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

D. Taylor, Chairman  
L. Peters  
J. Sherman  
T. Clark (*arrived at 7:03 p.m.*)  
D. West  
B. Hickey  
C. Aberg

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Chairman Taylor began the meeting at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

**2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the October 3, 2023, Conservation Commission meeting for consideration. He called for discussion. There was none.

**MOTION:**

To approve the minutes of the October 3, 2023, Conservation Commission meeting as presented.

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by J. Sherman

Vote: 6-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, Sherman, West, Hickey, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

**3. CORRESPONDENCE**

Chairman Taylor reminded the Commission about a discussion of beech leaf disease at the Senior Center on November 18, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

#### 4. CURRENT BUSINESS

Chairman Taylor decided to delay the conversation of the Pollinator Pathway while they waited for Marla Martin from the library to arrive.

##### a) **Trash Reduction Pilot Program**

Members L. Peters and C. Aberg volunteered to be on the committee for the program. Their first meeting was November 1, 2023 and was mainly introductory. Richard Coates, who is also on the Board of Finance was elected to be the Chairman. The timeline for the Committee is very aggressive in order to make the budget planning. The task force is to give recommendations to the Board of Selectmen by mid-January. They will have meetings every two weeks and are also to visit other transfer stations to see what the other towns have done. C. Aberg commented that the main problem she has is that there is so far no allowance to include condo complexes in the program other than individuals bringing it themselves. The DEEP has grants to extend the program past the end date in February. The town will try to apply for that grant since any new program cannot be implemented until July 1, 2024, with the new budget. The members felt that two months planning is not enough time to develop a long term plan.

Discussion continued about the transfer station issues, such as that the employees are sub-contractors and there are often short-handed. Another issue is that the only way to pay for bulk trash is with cash and sometimes there is a backup so people don't wait and just dump. T. Clark suggested that Nonnewaug students could be enlisted to volunteer and that would go to their 100 volunteer hours. L. Peters will be attending the CACIWC conference and will be listening to the composting class. The town of Westport will be presenting their experience. This discussion will continue as the Committee proceeds with its findings.

##### b) **Pollinator Pathway Presentation at Woodbury Library**

Marla Martin from the library addressed the Commission. She stated that the program will be done in two segments. The first one will be Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. and will have lectures from the Conservation Commission and Lisa Turoczi from Earth Tones. The second presentation will be Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. and will be a panel of local non-profit organizations and communities that have installed pathways. Marti from the Garden Club and Jamie Gore from the Parks & Recreation department will be presenting. J. Gore will also try to get people that she worked with on the successful Darien project. M. Martin will reach out to Rolf Anderson and also to someone from the Steep Rock Association. D. Taylor will reach out to Vince Lafontan at Flanders. L. Peters will also reach out to the Vo-Ag Department at the High School.

The Garden Club will bring fliers and informational material. It is important to teach why it is beneficial to establish pathways and why we should care. Most pathways take about three years to establish and then maintenance is needed. This led to a discussion of meadows and different types of gardens. The Commission will need someone who is a good moderator for the panel presentation to make sure that the important information is presented. Depending on how the program is received it could be presented again. T. Clark suggested having a QR code available to bring people to the Conservation web page which will then have links to other pertinent information regarding the project. There was a discussion of Earth Day and who would be sponsoring it this year. No one has heard a date scheduled. It is a lot of work for the PRWC since they have limited resources. There was discussion about New Morning, Flanders or the Parks &

Rec department sponsoring it, but it is a large undertaking. Chairman Taylor recommended for members to contact the First Selectman to encourage the process to get started.

**c) Town Clean-up Day**

J. Sherman stated that the turn-out was disappointing. He feels that they seem to have lost momentum since the pandemic. Discussion commenced on new ways to motivate volunteers for the spring. Two High-school seniors showed up and will help to spread the word next time. J. Sherman said he will contact the High School to promote it for community credit hours. He will also say that work can be done anytime between 8:00-12:00 so that late risers won't be discouraged from showing up. C. Aberg will try to kickstart people on the email list again. Spring clean-up will be Saturday, April 6, 2024.

**d) Stomski Way, Minortown Road**

J. Sherman stated that he met with Christian Allen to spray the Japanese knotweed. A week later, the knotweed was burned out. A few weeks later there was a hard frost which will help to kill it. There are three patches of knotweed and Mr. Allen recommended planting three different plants in place that are hardy against invasives. J. Sherman felt that this is a whole area open for a pollinator pathway now that the knotweed will eventually be gone. The next step is to see how vigorous the knotweed comes back in the spring and then continue to treat next fall until it is gone.

**e) Budget Discussion**

Chairman Taylor opened the discussion with a non-monetary budget concern. He talked of Three Rivers Park. There is a lot of storm damage that tore out a large part of the riverbank. There is also a large tree down in the river. The Parks & Rec department is going to Inland Wetland Agency meetings with a plan for dealing with the issues. The IWA had a special meeting October 27th at the site. The minutes from that meeting are extensive on the damage. There is concern for more of the riverbank getting eroded. Since there is more rain every year, there does need to be a more significant long term plan for the banks with appropriate plants. The buffer will also need to be expanded now. This project will require a lot of funding. The Town can look to the LIFF for some grant money that needs to be matched in kind which can put a value on work to qualify. Part of the Conservation Commission budget work is to tell other departments what they might need to budget for.

Discussion ensued of the leased farm fields. The riparian area is widening, which will then cut into some farm leases. The river is actually wider than the bridges at this point. A big concern are the pesticides used that are washing into the river. This will be a big, long project. Members were advised to start nudging other departments on this issue because otherwise it will be disastrous if nothing is done.

The Hollow Park Master Plan is also being worked on. There was a meeting with a consulting group on what are the suggestions and things that the town wants to do with the area. There was a public meeting also for what people want out of the park. The Parks & Rec department just received the completed plan for review. D. Taylor has not seen plan yet. The Commission's main concern in the project is what to do with the riverbank. There was discussion about the possibility of irrigation systems and the impact to events. The IWA would need to approve any irrigation system.

The Conservation Commission’s budget last year was \$4,000. It was not all used because the HWA project did not use as much money as originally estimated once there was a hard freeze. Chairman Taylor recommended that everyone seriously think about any activities; HWA, brochures, pollinator pathway and knotweed projects and what type a budget will be needed. This number needs to get nailed down for the next meeting.

**f) Open Space Brochure**

Chairman Taylor said he went to the printer to get an estimate for brochures to include in the budget. The consensus was that someone would be needed who has good digital skills to do graphic layout so it looks professional. There may be a cost with that.

**g) Newsletter**

**C. Aberg** needs to revamp the newsletter since some information is out of date now. The newsletter needs to be done in time to hand out at the Pollinator Pathway presentation.

**h) 2024 Meeting Calendar**

Chairman Taylor passed out annual meeting schedule for consideration.

**MOTION:**

To approve the 2024 Conservation Commission Meeting Schedule as presented.

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by D. West

Vote: 7-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Sherman, Peters, West, Aberg, Hickey, Clark

Nays: None

Abstain: None

**i) Nominating Committee for Commission Officers**

D. West and J. Sherman will form the Nominating Committee. All members are instructed to contact them if they are interested in being the Chair or Vice Chair.

**j) Open Space Issues, Input to Departmental Budgets**

This item was already covered during the budget discussion.

**5. MEMBER TIME**

J. Sherman noted that Nonnewaug Falls is in trouble. He spoke with Linda Casper who lives near the falls. She mentioned that there used to be the Friends of Nonnewaug Falls Committee which was associated with the Conservation Commission. She told J. Sherman about some issues with Young’s Nursery, the owner across the river. There are also huge trees down across the river. He shared photos with the members showing there is serious erosion that has happened since June. D. West reopened the discussion of volunteers for a monitoring program. T. Clark suggested a self-reporting system with a QR code that leads to a “Report It” page. L. Peters suggested the pictures be posted on the website along with pictures of Three Rivers so people are aware and then understand why a budget is needed for maintenance items. The members thought these ideas were worth considering

**6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

There were no comments from the floor.

**7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

The next meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2023.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

To adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

Made by D. West, Seconded by L. Peters  
Consensus of the Commission in favor 7-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

*Robyn Wright*

Robyn Wright  
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

*Copies of documents and meeting audio are available at the Land Use Office*

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
This 14<sup>th</sup> day of NOV 2023  
at 2:00 o'clock PM  
*Maria M. Mancini*  
Treasurer