

Minutes from the Craftsbury Conservation Commission meeting 3/20/23 - In attendance: Steve Moffatt (chair), Colin Netzley (secretary), Farley Brown, Brian Machesney, Liz Kegl, Elinor Osborn, and Susie Houston (selectboard liaison)

Absent: Diane Morgan (treasurer)

-Meeting called to order at 7:04 by Steve

-New agenda item: Town Meeting Day update - funds were approved. Joe Young asked several questions about what the Conservation Fund was for and how it was to be used. Steve read from prepared material (attached).

-Brian moved to approve January and February minutes, Farley 2nd. Unanimous approval. A few edits were made to spell out acronyms for clarity and to delete a mistake regarding Town Meeting Day preparations.

-New member discussions - Stark Biddle and Mike Roussel emailed Steve with letters of interest in the open seats. Doug Wolcik and Nancy Milholland both expressed interest, but were not present at meeting. Discussions for the four interested parties moved to end of meeting for an executive session.

Susie suggested that we stagger seat reappointments by making the two open seats begin a new four-year term when they are filled as opposed to the current setup, where the new seats would finish a term before being reappointed for a full four-year term. Farley moved to make our new Conservation Commission members serve a full 4-year term upon appointment. Colin 2nd. Unanimous approval.

-Act 171 update - Farley reiterated that the updated town plan must be approved by June '24 and the town is behind with regards to Act 171. Farley suggested the town request to only update and not totally rewrite the plan because of Vermont legislature slowing things down. According to NVDA, Act 171 is a mandate, but we are only required to include in the plan the maps given by the state, which we already have prepared. Act 171 update/discussion put on the agenda for May or June meeting.

-Outreach plans/goals - "Tools of the Trade" event hosted by the Conservation Commission during June 19th meeting. Panel discussion made up of possibly Jens Hilke, Tracy Cheryl, Jared Nunery, and Bruce Urie. Diane will contact panelists for availability and will prepare a few questions to ask panelists (sent in by Conservation Commission members)

-Working Group reports - Invasives - Drafted letter of support for Invasives Day in Vermont (attached). Brian suggested an edit. Brian moved to send the letter of support to Bernie Paquette in support of creating an Invasives Day. Elinor 2nd. Unanimous approval. Elinor invited those present to come up with ideas for steep slope work for the knotweed

demonstration site. Elinor will also contact Mike Wichrowski for suggestions/ideas. More brainstorming will happen at May meeting.

-Next meeting items:

- Review natural heritage section of town plan
- New member discussions continue
- "Tools of the Trade" discussion

-Colin moved to enter executive session for discussion of Conservation Commission candidates at 7:49. Brian 2nd. Adjourned executive session at 8:04. Farley moves to have Steve request letters of interest from Doug and Nancy.

-Farley moved to adjourn meeting at 8:07. Elinor 2nd.

The Craftsbury Conservation Commission is writing in support of the Vermont Invasive Species Management Day. A statewide effort to put the issues surrounding the influx of non-native invasive species in the forefront each year would be beneficial.

Since its inception in 2007, the Craftsbury Conservation Commission has been concerned with the invasive species problem. Our mission includes providing outreach and information programs on all invasives having organized several presentations for the public. We purchased two Weed Wrenches which are on loan from our public library.

Since 2017, we have conducted a Knotweed Demonstration Project. There is a sign board on site with 'before and after' photos, free informational brochures, and other posters. The main purpose of the project has been to demonstrate the various methods of control, and hopefully eradication. We have had volunteer help from the community and cooperation with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and Sterling College.

The Craftsbury Outdoor Center has been battling the intensive infestation of Eurasian milfoil on Big Hosmer Pond. For many years on an informal basis, Craftsbury residents have been searching for signs of milfoil and other nonnative aquatic invasives in Little Hosmer Pond. Because the surrounding lakes are inundated with milfoil, the Conservation Commission with cooperation and instruction from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the Craftsbury Outdoor Center, has organized a more concentrated effort to schedule patrollers on a weekly or biweekly basis throughout the summer.

Emerald Ash Borer/ash tree road inventory? ???? nothing happening yet?

When wild chervil first appeared on a section of roadside north of the Common, a group of volunteers on their own tried to tackle it for a couple of years by cutting the plants before they went to seed and leaving them to dry, but it got ahead of them so it, too, persists.

Our hope is that the proposed Vermont Invasives Species Management Day will encourage more volunteer efforts to control invasives in public areas and especially to encourage landowners to deal with their own infestations.

We thank you for your dedication to this project.

Sincerely,

The members of the Craftsbury Conservation Commission