

CRAFTSBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

September 20, 2021

Called to order at 7:04 p.m., Craftsbury Town Hall

PRESENT: Diane Morgan (acting Chair), June Pichel Cook, Brian Machesney, Elinor Osborn, Ashley Nunery, Susie Houston (Selectboard Liaison)

ABSENT: Farley Brown, Steve Moffat, Heidi Rich

PUBLIC: Colin Netzlay arrived at 7:37pm.

AGENDA ADDITIONS: Diane added an item to review the dedication of the Steve Wright Memorial Bench.

MINUTES: Ashley moved to approve the minutes of August 16, 2021 meeting. June seconded the motion. After amending the draft minutes to include Susie's absence, the minutes were unanimously approved.

GRANT PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: The Selectboard is gathering information re: how ARPA funds can be spent by 2024.

NEW MEMBER UPDATE: Selectboard forwarded information from two candidates for consideration. The differences in their submissions caused the Commission to delay action until both candidates had the opportunity to respond to the same set of questions. June suggested that a "job description" be added to the Commission's web page. Arriving after this discussion, Colin answered some questions from Commissioners.

PLANTINGS BY STERLING COLLEGE STUDENTS AT JAPANESE KNOTWEED

DEMONSTRATION SITE: Members of the "Invasives" working group will meet with Farley on September 24 to plan the work, which will be performed on September 27. The project comprises the creation and anchoring of willow fascines in an area cleared of Japanese Knotweed.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- Educational Outreach: Ashley reviewed the WG meeting that was held on September 20. Commission welcomed the suggestion that the WG regularly post brief accounts of Commission activities on Town Facebook page and on Front Porch Forum. First instalment will cover Diane's letter to Little Hosmer Pond "stakeholders." June agreed to check for broken links on CCC web page and ask Michelle Warren to repair.
- Invasive and Non-native Species Control: Elinor reviewed the attached report.

MUNICIPAL FOREST COMMITTEE UPDATE, RE: ASH TREE INVENTORY: In an email to Commissioners before the meeting, Steve wrote that Rob Libby is working on a plan. Prophylactic cutting of ash trees is not presently being considered.

STEVE WRIGHT MEMORIAL BENCH DEDICATION: Susie thanked Diane for organizing a very successful ceremony featuring seven speakers among twenty-five attendees. Diane thanked June, Farley and Steve for their contributions.

NEXT MEETING: The Commission will meet on October 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in Town Hall.
Proposed agenda to include: new member prospects; working group reports; plantings by Sterling students at Japanese Knotweed demonstration site; plan for inventory of ash trees.

Brian moved to adjourn at 8:04pm. Elinor seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Submitted by Brian Machesney, Secretary

REPORT: INVASIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPECIES CONTROL WORK GROUP

September 20, 2021

Milfoil Prevention in Little Hosmer Pond

The final two checks of Little Hosmer were done the middle of August and the middle of September. No Eurasian milfoil was found. Some kind of a floating green algae was found at the north end of the lake in August and early September, but it was gone by mid-September. Diane has reported to the State on our findings and asked if the algae is something to be concerned about, but has not heard back yet. Diane has also sent a report of the summer's work to residents living on and around the lake.

Japanese Knotweed Control

- Brian and Elinor worked on the cutting demo. Brian mowed twice and dug root balls to flatten the area – 3 hours.
- Elinor watered, pulled JK sneaking out from under the tarps and installed the rope delineating the mowed area from the natural vegetation – 45 min.
- Elinor cut around the plantings – 45 min.
- WG meeting at the site to determine next steps – 1 hr. Diane and Elinor cut JK shading the plantings – 30 min.
 - Elinor caught up with Brian next day to review WG meeting – 45 min.
- Elinor used string trimmer to lawnmower cut a strip along rope – 20 min.
- Elinor composed emails to F&W of our work on the cutting demo along with photos – 2 hours.
- WG will meet with Farley to discuss what work her students will be doing.