



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Mike Marelli

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting was called to order by acting Chairman James Harwood at 6:48 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner James Harwood
Commissioner David Holdridge
Commissioner Kathleen Edgecomb
Commissioner Betsy Graham
Commissioner Barbara Kil

Excused Commissioner Roberta Levandoski
Commissioner Michael E. Marelli

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE Regular Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2024, as written.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kathleen Edgecomb

SECONDER: Betsy Graham

AYE 5 Harwood Holdridge Edgecomb Graham Kil

EXCUSED 2 Levandoski Marelli

IV. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence.

None.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Public Comments.

Resident David Cohen of 100 Whalehead Road was present.

Mr. Cohen, whose property abuts Glacier Park, asked if the Commission can put up some signs to prevent hikers from trespassing on his property. A sign behind the bench along the trail would

be helpful. He said the trail is marked but since his house is close to the trail, people wander onto his property. The Commission agreed that putting up "private property" signs along the property line would be appropriate. Mr. Cohen's phone number and email will be passed along to Chairman Marelli for further action.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Informational Items.

1. Riparian buffers - Chairman Marelli began researching and drawing up a proposal to pass an ordinance/zoning regulation for riparian buffers on all the Town's inland wetland waterways to be presented to Town Commissions. Chairman Marelli discussed this subject with Juliet Hodge, Town Planner and the Mayor Fred Allyn III, both are in favor.
2. Chairman Marelli attended the Mystic River Watershed Alliance meeting on February 22, 2024. Betsy Graham also attended and reported that the Alliance is looking for students to participate in co-designing solutions to problems along the watershed. Ms. Kil said she will contact someone at the Ledyard HS Agricultural Department.
3. Chairman Marelli attended the Connecticut Sea Grant Program for sustainable and resilient communities funding workshop at UConn Avery Point campus in Groton on March 7, 2024. He spoke with CT DEEP representatives concerning potential grant opportunities for the future.
4. Funding ideas, including a possible timber harvest was discussed with the Mayor.
5. Chairman Marelli is researching professional foresters and invasive plant removal companies for Burton Property, including possible grants. He has still not heard back from the State Forester. The Commission is expecting a written report soon.
6. Should the Commission contribute to the Connecticut Land Conservation Council? The Commission has supported the group in the past but last year did not make a contribution, which was an oversight. All agreed to contribute and Support the Council.

ACTION ITEM:

Vote on an amount to contribute to the Land Conservation Council during the April meeting.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Property Walks.

No comments.

2. Financial Reports.

No comments.

3. Pollinator Pathways Project continued.

Chairman Marelli met with Scott Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director, who will speak with Public Works to ask them to look at the Highland Lake Park drainage situation. Parks and Recreation is short staffed and that prevented the completion of plans for the Bush Pond project. The draft plan addressed to various Commissions will be submitted for approval. Planting the

riparian buffer should be started soon. Chairman Marelli offered the Commission to help with planting. Parks and Recreation will ask the Rotary Club for help tending to the gardens.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. Field clearing at White-Hall Property.

Chairman Marelli asked the Mayor if he knew anyone with a brush hog to work on the fields. Rocky's Landscaping said he has some options in mind, trying to set up a meeting to discuss. Maggie Jones will complete her report on White-Hall by the end of March. She also asked if the Commission could get a group together within the next couple weeks to clear back trails. Mr. Harwood reported that the trails are mostly clear with only a few sections with overhanging brush.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

5. Areas of interest and goals for 2024 continued.

No comments.

6. Request for Budget item continued.

Funding for boat inspections - Ms. Graham made a presentation to the Town Council to request funding for a pilot program to monitor invasive species at the Town's boat launches. The Council said the program would need to be managed and suggested the Conservation Commission as a manager. It was referred to the Mayor and Matt Bonin, Finance Director, for further discussion. Ms. Graham said if the Commission decides to take on the program, she suggested hiring a temp service to manage hiring, payroll for employees, etc. The program would also include volunteers.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

7. Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission.

40 Barton Lane - the Mayor said he is contacting all parties so crossing ROW to access the trails will be permitted. No trespassing signs are removed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Other New Business to come before the Commission.

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 7:41 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: David Holdridge

SECONDER: Barbara Kil

AYE 5 Harwood Holdridge Edgecomb Graham Kil

EXCUSED 2 Levandoski Marelli

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.