

Columbia Conservation and Agriculture Commission

Regular Meeting Thursday, September 3, 2015

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Present: Members Paul Ramsey, Anthony Ortiz, Tom McGrath, Ann Dunnack

Absent: Walt Tabor, Chris Tolsdorf, Chris McGrath

Approval of Minutes: 8/6/2015 motion made by Paul Ramsey, Tom McGrath 2nd, passed unanimously

Audience of Citizens: none

1. Old Business

1.1 Mono Pond Invasive Aquatic Plants

- Dr Kortman spoke at the Columbia Lake Management meeting on 09/01 about Mono Pond. Ann, Paul and Anthony attended and summarized what was presented
 - Dr Kortman believes we should continue to study Mono pond on an annual basis
 - Dr Kortman recommends we should apply for state grant to cover cost of annual study
 - Mono Pond water is of high quality, fanwort is predominant invasive and is currently staying low to the bottom, the bottom of mono pond is basically flooded topsoil and much more prone to invasives than the bottom of Columbia lake which is primarily mineral/rocky not top soil. There is no blue green algae. He is going to consider increasing the depth of Mono pond by adding a board to the dam raising the water level 6 or more inches making it more navigatable.
 - Motion made Paul, Anthony 2nd passed unanimously to have Ann send a letter to BOS and Town Administrator to have the Town immediately apply for the Grant

1.2 Conservation Easement Monitoring

- Tom and Chris McGrath will try to start doing the easement monitoring again later this year.

1.3 Trail Maintenance

- Ann Dunnack reported Utley Hill trails in good shape. ECSU ECO group built the bridge in on the trails August 28th
- Ann is taking on new duties with Joshua's Trust as their Stewardship Chair.
- Tom McGrath reported that the Szegda farm and Island woods trails are good

1.4 Planning projects

- Farm Tours – Anthony Ortiz to head up. Ivy Coleman on upper pine street Sunday September 27th

1.5 2016 POCD

- Paula Stahl will be sending out a survey to residents (approved by PZC)
- Want to add invasives aquatic and other to Natural resource section
- Brochure on Agriculture in town being updated

2. New Business

2.1 PZC/IWWCC site walk/reviews

- No action

2.2. Town Farm Building Tax Exemption

- Tom McGrath will discuss with the Town Financial director and Tax collector the documents that Paul Ramsey shared with the committee the application form used by Guilford CT for Farm Building Tax Exemption.
<http://www.ci.guilford.ct.us/pdf/assessor-farm-building-exemption.pdf>
- Tom McGrath shared with the committee that many towns now offer farm building and farm equipment tax exemptions <http://ctplanningforagriculture.com/tax-policies.php>

2.3 Other

- Town Administrator mentioned there may be some interest in participating 2 organizations Salmon River Watershed and New England Forestry Foundation
<http://www.salmonriverct.org/>
<http://www.newenglandforestry.org/>
- CACIWC – CT Association Conservation & Inlands Wetlands Commission November 14th (Tom McGrath, Chris McGrath may attend)
<http://www.caciwc.org/>
<http://www.caciwc.org/pages/annualMtg/2015/index.html> (registration)

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Tom McGrath

Received: December 8, 2015
At: 10:40 AM
Attest: Paul Stahl ASSR
Town Clerk/ Assistant Town Clerk TC