

These minutes are draft until approved

___ Approved

___ Approved with changes.

Effingham Conservation Commission Meeting minutes, September 6, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:42 p.m. There were no guests or members of the public.

Organizational Issues:

- The minutes of the Aug. 1, 2022 meeting were approved.
- Financial Report: With \$597 remaining in the 2022 budget, a check for \$1,000.00 will be released to GMCG for water quality monitoring. The shortfall will be covered by unexpended funds from 2021, carried over in accordance with established policy regarding conservation commission budget funding. An additional \$2,500.00 has been paid to Andrew Lester/Bella Terra Trail Design for design and construction of trails in the PRCP. Money was appropriated for the 2021 budget and not paid out because work had not been completed.

Water Issues:

- In response to ECC's rather vague request for input from Dan Coons regarding priorities for water and wetland protection ideas in Effingham, Dan provided a rather vague response suggesting mechanisms that Effingham mostly already has. Members agreed that there wasn't much new ground to plow. Regarding the parallel request to research FEMA floodplain regulations and strategies, Dan provided nothing. Members agreed that FEMA floodplain issues were more administrative relating to infrastructure and development than to conservation of resources and wetland protection.
- Chair has contacted Cliff Cabral of New England Milfoil to get the town onto the schedule for a survey and any harvesting that proves to be needed.

Land Issues:

- Chair contacted Audrey Frasier with pictures of tree damage and hazards at the LLP. Chair also attended a BOS meeting to make sure that they were aware of the potential liability and hazard to visitors. BOS responded that it "would be addressed," but provided no timeline. Chair plans to attend the Sept. 20 BOS meeting to keep the issue alive.

Education and Outreach:

- Kamal circulated and email listing programs available from Squam Lakes Natural Sciences Center and the Center for Wildlife, as possibilities for next year's Street Fair. Chair first asked whether ECC wanted to have a program at all, if there is a street fair. This year's program on Birds of Prey was very well attended, with an audience of about 50 people. Diane moved and Jack seconded to have a program. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Members then discussed the various offerings from the two places, leaning toward something from SLNSC to alternate between the two program providers. Members were then going to peruse whatever information SLNSC and CFW have on their websites. In addition to numerous pre-packaged programs, each center offers to create a custom program.

Other Business and Special Reports:

- Members discussed whether and when to propose a warrant article devoting a larger percentage – up to 100 percent – of the Current Use Change Tax to the conservation fund. Despite the fact that the actual dollar amount has tended to be small, some members felt that it might be viewed unfavorably by citizens inclined to be extraordinarily critical of town budgeting priorities, and that the resulting public image would make conservation efforts unnecessarily more difficult.
- The state will hold a controlled burn in the Pine River State Forest some time this fall. Date to be determined based on conditions.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, Oct. 3, 2022, at the municipal offices, School Street, at 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Emelyn Albert (*Chair*); Diane Jarecki; Steve Jarecki; Harry Libby; Kamal Nath; Tim White (*Recording Secretary*); Jack Williams (*Vice Chair/Treasurer*) Absent: Virginia Wrabel(*alt.*); Bill Wrabel (*alt.*)

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Recording Secretary

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