

These minutes are draft until approved

___Approved

___Approved with changes.

Effingham Conservation Commission Meeting minutes, May 1, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m. There were no guests or members of the public. They don't know what they're missing.

Organizational Issues:

- The minutes of the April 3, 2023 meeting were approved.
- Financial Report: The 2023 budget has not been tapped yet, leaving \$4,355.00. Chair will submit a request for the \$250.00 ECC provides to send a student from Effingham to environmental camp, reimbursement for expenses for the cookout after the roadside cleanup, and to cover the cost of the book prizes for the EES Earth Day poster contest. The conservation fund balance is \$16,960.71. The invasive plant fund balance is \$13,657.65.

Water Issues:

- Chair will contact Cliff Cabral of New England Milfoil regarding this year's milfoil removal activities, and about disposal of the plants harvested. Bill Klotz used to compost it. This is apparently safe to do at a sufficient distance from surface water where the plant could reestablish itself.

Land Issues:

- On Monday, April 17, a small group cleaned up at the LLP. A professional crew had cut the more dangerous and challenging blowdowns from the microburst last July, as well as anything brought down by the heavy snow in December. The ECC crew concentrated on cutting up and moving whatever they could from the area. Volunteers included Emelyn Albert, Anya Bartoswicz, Mike Cahalane, Jack Williams, and some other guy. Mike and Jack sawed up many downed trees near the birdwatching platform. Another cleanup day is scheduled for Monday, May 8, at 9 a.m. Emelyn and Harry discussed options for having a professional pick up the large amount of debris that the work party hopes to move to the road edge for easier access.

Education and Outreach:

- The informative Birds, Bats, and Butterflies presentation by Wendy Scribner of UNH Extension was unfortunately poorly attended, with only two members of the public attending. Kamal suggested returning to the library for future presentations, and enlisting cosponsors, as ECC did before. This increases the promotional reach through multiple organizations and provides a venue more commonly associated with activities of this nature.
- The Earth Day roadside cleanup was held on Saturday, April 29. Attendance was low again this year, possibly because of the weather. Still, for 12 recorded volunteers, the haul was 100 bags as of 3:45 p.m. Lennie Espie and Grace and Chuck Fuller did outstanding work, and Anya Bartoswicz collected 15 bags by herself, covering at least a mile and a half of Green Mountain Road. Only five people attended the cookout afterward.

Chuck Fuller suggested combining with the library next year. Members discussed the advantages of this more central location, especially considering the more active role the library wants to take in becoming a community center. For the cleanup, it is more centrally located in town, and much closer to the transfer station. Members agreed to pursue this course for next year.

- ECC instituted a new format in judging the Earth Day poster contest for EES students, attempting to streamline the process of winnowing the efforts of dozens of school children down to a single winner per grade. Book prizes will be awarded to those winners on Monday, May 15.

Other Business and Special Reports:

- Pending approval from the town treasurer, ECC will open a money market account at Northway Bank, paying 5% interest. Diane moved and Jack seconded the motion to make this change. Vote to approve was unanimous.
- The Meena gas station continues to generate turbulence for the planning board. The zoning officer apparently decided that the delay in completing the site plan review for the gas station portion of the business has led to the convenience store portion of it being inadvertently abandoned. Meena had been given the option to keep the store open during the process of determining if the gas station part could proceed, and had chosen to leave the store closed. Thus it hasn't operated in more than the two years that signify abandonment of a use under the Effingham zoning ordinance. Now the zoning officer's assertion needs to be settled before there's a clear path to operate the store. Meanwhile, the gas station review process continues to be bogged down in technical materials submitted by Meena to be reviewed by the independent engineers.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, June 5, 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 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Recording Secretary

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