

OFFICIAL MINUTES: Business Meeting
Eliot Conservation Commission
Eliot, Maine 03903

DATE: March 1, 2023

OFFICERS:

Chair: Kari Moore

Vice Chair: Lisa Wise

Secretary: Peter Egelston

Treasurer: Lynn Bubley

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM.

1. 6:03 PM Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order with roll call at 6:03 pm by Kari Moore.

In attendance: Kari Moore (Chair), Lynn Bubley (Treasurer), Peter Egelston (Secretary), Lisa Wise (Vice Chairman), David Marshall, Cyndy Camp

This evening's Beginning with Habitat presentation with Steve Walker has been cancelled.

2. Public Input:

None

3. Review and approve past minutes:

Minutes from the 2/1/2023 meeting were reviewed. Peter will resubmit with edits for approval at a future date.

4. Financial:

Lynn asked if a check was issued to Jeff Parmlee for the Big Night presentation, and Kari confirmed that it was. For the postponed Center for Wildlife presentation, a check was cut but not issued. Will this check be valid when the rescheduled event takes place on April 18? Kari suggested asking Kristin at Town Hall.

Kari asked about the new process for securing funds, which requires a request to be made to the Select Board two weeks prior to the issuance of a check. Lynn outlined the steps:

- A signed copy of a contract is to be presented to the Town Manager, accompanied by a memo from the ECC chair.
- A warrant must be signed by at least three members of the Select Board.

David asked if this means that the ECC has no authority to spend money, even if it is in its budget. Kari replied that it would appear so. Peter expressed his frustration at what he perceived as

excessive micromanagement on the Town's part. If the money has already been allocated, why does the ECC have to jump through additional hoops to spend it?

There is no update on the Land Bank funds or the Johnson Lane maintenance line item in the ECC budget.

Lynn reported on the remaining funds in the budget.

Lisa will be attending the 2023 Sustainability and Water conference (<https://umaine.edu/mitchellcenter/home/2023-maine-sustainability-water-conference/>) in Augusta on March 30. The registration fee is \$60, plus mileage, which ECC members believe is a worthwhile expenditure. The question was raised, will the Town pay for some or all of this?

A motion was made: The ECC requests that the Town fund Lisa's registration, plus mileage, up to a maximum of \$198, and if those funds are not available, that the ECC will fund this amount.

All voted in favor of this motion.

5. Project Development/Permit Review/Planning Studies

Project review

The ECC considered the proposal for the expansion of Safe Harbor Boat Yard, which is in the early stages of approval. It was determined that more information would be helpful and that asking the applicant to present to the ECC would be desirable.

Comprehensive Plan

A Community Visioning Session is scheduled on March 22, from 3 to 6:30pm in the Regatta Room at the Eliot Commons, followed by a full Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting, from 6:30 to 8:00, to which the public is invited.

Peter mentioned that when the results of the Community Survey were reviewed in the Environment sub-committee meeting, it was suggested that an explanatory narrative accompany the survey results. Lisa mentioned the need to "tease the numbers out" by demographic groups, and remarked on the low participation of the youngest (under 24) age

Climate Resiliency Project

Lisa reported that Abbie from the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission has drafted a grant application for a vulnerability assessment, which has risen to the top of the list of priorities.

Foreclosure properties

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the disposal of several properties facing foreclosure by the Town of Eliot.

- A commercial lot on 220 Beech Road, currently Prime Storage
- The “Chase” parcel (residential).
- The Weeks property off Goodwin Road, a 4+ acre parcel. It was asked if this would be a good candidate for conservation.
- The Murphy property, for which the Great Works Regional Land Trust holds a conservation easement. The question was raised if this easement would survive foreclosure. David asked if the best approach would be for the Town to foreclose, then transfer it to the GWRLT. Lynn and Lisa offered to reach out to the GWRLT about this, and David offered legal consultation.

In summary, Kari will report to Mike Sullivan that the ECC is interested in exploring conservation options for the Weeks and Murphy properties, but not the Chase or Prime Storage sites, although there may be some benefit to conservation arising from the sale of those parcels.

6. Education/Outreach

There was some discussion about Jeff Parmlee’s Frogs and Salamanders presentation. Registration for Big Night is open (<https://www.vernalpools.me/big-night/>), and three sites in Eliot have been identified.

Spring Cleanup. Earth Day (April 22) is a Saturday this year. Should the clean up be scheduled to coordinate with that? Peter volunteered to organize this year’s Spring cleanup. The first step is to identify a location, and it was mentioned that the PD and DPW may have suggestions. Lisa and Lynn offered to help as well.

7. Round Table

Lisa shared some dates for upcoming GWRLT events.

Kari mentioned that she has identified emerald ash borers on her property and will be reporting it to the state. She encouraged everyone to keep an eye out for pests: they are all around!

David asked if red pine blister needs to be reported. No one was sure, but Kari offered to provide resources from the state on the topic.

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday April 5, at 630 PM.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

122 Peter Egelston
123 Secretary
124 CC: Eliot Town Clerk, Commission Members, Commission File
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