

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

DATE: January 2, 2019
APPROVED: February 6, 2019

OFFICERS:

Chair: Kari Moore
Vice chairman: Kimberly Richards
Secretary: Lisa Wise
Treasurer: Lisa Wise

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM at the Eliot Town Hall. Video does not appear to be working. Kari will let Wendy know. Kari confirmed with Dana that with three members, two is a quorum.

In attendance: Lisa Wise, Kari Moore, Kimberly Richards

Review and Approve Past Minutes: 12/6/18 – clarify town treasurer (line 62). Kari made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Kim seconded. All in favor. Lisa: Submit revised minutes.

Public input: Tom Dundzila, Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) presentation – Tom provided a packet of information. EAB has been discovered in Maine – Berwick – threat due to our proximity. 10 miles is considered the ‘danger zone.’ Kari noted there are ash trees in her yard. Ash trees provide aesthetic, economic, and ecological value. Will need to remove and replace affected ash trees. That’s where the management plan comes in. Tom suggests informing the Town Manager, Select Board, others that this is coming; spend more time learning about EAB; talk to other municipalities and the state and federal government and learn from their experiences; create a management plan – this will involve a budget, doing an inventory to find out how many ash trees are in the town. Education – not moving firewood, how to dispose. Asking ECC to take this on as a project, pass it along to others in town. Kari: We’re on Select Board agenda 1/10 re: the forest management plan – we can share this information with them and incorporate EAB and other invasives/pests into the management plan. The best thing to do is to inventory. Focus on the town forest, then expand into other town lands.

Kim: We can connect with other municipalities, and share information with landowners.

Kari: Add this information to our factsheets we offer at events, connect with Great Works Regional Land Trust about how they’re dealing with this.

Lisa: Connect with Wendy to add this information to the website.

Kim: Check with Maine Association of Conservation Commissions – share the information with others.

Tom: Also look to NH – they’ve already been hit with EAB.

Tom: Concerns include loss of economic value of trees and safety issues (e.g., power lines).

Financial report: Still need the land bank documentation, confirm MEACC membership. Lisa follow up. Budget meeting – Kari: Back and forth about when we will be able to present – 1/31 (need to confirm). Are we presenting in front of both the budget committee and the Select Board?

Two vacant board positions – treasurer and vice chair. Kari made a motion to nominate Kim as vice chair. Kim accepted, Lisa seconded, all in favor. Motion passes. Kari made a motion to nominate Lisa as treasurer (in

addition to secretary). Lisa accepted, Kim seconded, all in favor. Motion passes. Kari will follow up with Wendy re: updating the roles on the website.

Project Development/Permit Review: Nothing on the Planning Board agenda. Haven't heard anything new. Need to connect with the new planner.

Education/Outreach Initiatives

1/19 Winter hike with Great Works Land Trust (GWRLT) – Kari met with Darrell DeTour and Patti Mitchem from GWRLT to talk about the trail map they're working on. There's an access point off of Sam's Lane – that will be the main access where they want to put a parking area. They want to do at least one kiosk – map plus information. They will send us the draft content for approval/additions. They also asked about including the existing trails on the town forest (part of a regional effort). Potential volunteer project to mark the trails (summer?). Kari: Follow up with Sarah re: trail mapping data. Longer term project – think about the trail network. Kim: Dig up information re: trail building/marketing organization. Kari: Check with Patti re: registering. Connect with Wendy to post the event. (Info here: gwrlt.org/index.php/news-and-events/calendar/view/215)

Kari and GWRLT also talked about the Goodwin property and connecting on future conservation projects so we can help support. They recently were contacted by the Eliot Aging in Place Committee about doing a hike at the Savage Woods property. We could consider doing a joint event there in the spring – hike/cleanup.

Speaker series ideas – trail idea, vernal pools (see below; aim for late April/May)

Kim: Pesticides people use in their gardens/yards – dangers, alternatives. Maybe March? Lisa: Look into potential speakers/organizations. Tom suggested the Eliot Garden Club – every second Thursday at Eliot Congregational Church. Kim: Reach out to the Garden Club to see if they want to partner. Tom: Eliot United Methodist Church has gardens, maybe other churches/organizations do too.

York River Wild and Scenic Designation Support: Kari got an email from Jennifer Hunter (York River Study Coordinator) requesting a letter from the ECC to support the Designation. Lisa made a motion that Kari submits this letter to Dana for approval, then to Jennifer. Kim seconded, all in favor. Motion passes. Kari: Submit ECC letter of support to Dana then Jennifer.

Ongoing Conservation Efforts

New England Cottontail: Kari talked to Dana – Jeff Tash wants to survey the town transfer station property. Kari will connect him with Joel from Public Works.

Great Hill Gravel (ECC role): Jess and Sarah had been collecting contact info of abutters interested in water quality testing, shared with Dana for consideration. It sounded like ECC was paying for the testing (not the case). This was on the agenda for the last Select Board meeting, but it sounded like no action was taken. Lisa follow up with Dana to find out the status. June 20 letter from Della Corp was the last update re: Great Hill Gravel that we're aware of.

Vernal Pool Project: Kari met with Christine from Kittery Land Trust. They're on target to get the map from Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) on 1/15. Kari meeting with Wells Reserve folks, Liz Hertz, and Christine to talk about next steps (landowner letter). Just identifying vernal pools for now (not evaluating yet). MNAP

presenting mapping at Wells Reserve in February. Aram Calhoun doing the citizen volunteer training in early April. Monitoring would happen April-June. At our next meeting, we can look at the map and see where we want to focus. Maybe partner with GWRLT? Kari has a colleague who's a vernal pool expert, could do a program at the Grange Hall and then walk out to a field site.

Lisa: Get Kari the vernal pool manual. Kari looked into printing the vernal pool identification card set – quote for printing 6 sets was \$40 from Infinite Imaging. Kari will price out the printing costs and materials (dip nets, buckets) for the next meeting.

Forest Management Plan: We are on the agenda for 1/10 Select Board meeting to discuss our recommendations. Kari planning to attend.

Conservation Commission: Goals and Objectives – Conservation Planning

Kim: Bring spreadsheet of comprehensive plan action items related to the ECC to the February meeting.

Lisa: Send a reminder before the next meeting.

Roundtable:

Commission members

- Lisa mentioned that Jean Hardy shared concerns about draining of Little Brook Pond on Eliot Online. Lisa had reached out to former code enforcement officer and former town planner last year after Jean raised similar concerns. Planner had passed the information along to Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), but then staff turnover so we don't know what came of that. Lisa connected with new town planner and DEP staff, both of whom said they would look into it. Will follow up with Jean if we hear anything back.
- Lisa mentioned the upcoming Spinney Creek aquaculture hearing (focused on land ownership under the proposed site (Kittery side)) on Tuesday, 1/8, at 5pm at the Kittery Community Center.
- Kari mentioned that the ECC was invited to solar panel array ribbon-cutting at the transfer station at 10am on Friday, 1/4. Send all the invite from Dana.
- 1/12 Seacoast Environmental Film Festival, Kittery: kitterylandtrust.org/seacoast-environmental-film-festival/

Non-commission members – no comments

Next meeting: February 6, 2019, 6:30pm

Lisa made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kim seconded. All in favor. Adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Graichen

Secretary, ECC

Cc: Eliot Town Clerk, Commission Members, Commission File