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Patrick B. O'Sullivan
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Orange Conservation Commission

High Plains Conference Room
November 6, 2019
7:00 p.m.

(Unapproved Minutes)

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Chairman Cindy Ruggeri, Vice Chairman Sharon V. Ewen, Donna Wesolowski, Robert McCorkle, and Cathy Anderson

Staff Present: Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Guest: Robin Rathjens

I. Call to Order

- Chairman Ruggeri called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., noting the emergency exits. Everyone welcomed Ms. Rathjens, thanking her for her interest in participating on the Orange Conservation Commission.
- Ms. Anderson mentioned the Legal Notice in the local newspaper regarding the Biking Trails Policy at Racebrook Tract. A public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at the Orange Town Hall lower level conference room at 7:30 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to change the Town of Orange Code 294-12 to note that bicycling is only permitted on Town-designated trails from May 1st through November 30th. The Town of Woodbridge has been notified of this policy enforcement in Orange and a \$100 fine is applicable for every violation.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes - September 4, 2019

- The Commission members reviewed the September 4, 2019 OCC minutes for approval.

Ms. Wesolowski made a motion to approve the September fourth, 2019 Orange Conservation Commission minutes, seconded by Ms. Ruggeri. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

III. Financial Report

- Chairman Ruggeri reported that the current balance in the budget is \$3,034.12, as the only expenditure last month was \$165.88 for the line item Temporary Salary. The payment of \$200 to Mr. Clark, payment to Mr. Capp, and the cost of the Owl Prowl will be deducted from this existing balance.

VI. Old Business

A. Purple Martin House Site

- The projected site for the twenty-four-colony birdhouse is Ewen Preserve and the expectation is for the birdhouse to be in place for the spring nesting next year.

B. Goats for Invasive Growth

- Ms. Ewen indicated that the trial use of goats should begin in the spring, when invasive growth is on the rise. She intends to ask Mr. Cifarelli for funding for this trial project, as the Highway Department and the Parks and Recreation Department are unable to mow and maintain the Open Space and these areas have extensive overgrowth. The expected cost for the 2-week trial is \$140 per week.

C. Kiosk Updates

- The kiosk at Wepawaug needs a four-digit combination lock that will need to be purchased at a specialty lock shop, as Lowes and Home Depot do not carry this type.

D. Signs for Racebrook & Biking

- There are four signs at Racebrook Tract regarding mountain bikers and additional signage is held at the Highway Department.

E. Owl Prowl

- This Owl Prowl event went well and it proved to be a fun evening with the bonfire and snacks. An owl was sighted on this event. There was a brief discussion on the upcoming Bird Walk, tentatively scheduled for April 2020 for a 7:30 a.m. morning event. Rain dates were also considered.

V. New Business

A. Orange Country Fair Update

- Chairman Ruggeri prefers to have two booths for next year, as she felt somewhat crowded with the one booth this year. Mr. Harvey was unable to attend the Orange Country Fair this year, but Ms. Ruggeri is hopeful that he will be able to come and share

information about the Menunkatuck Audubon Society and the Purple Martin birdhouse next year.

B. Status of Fred Wolfe Park Maps

- Fred Wolfe Park is no longer passive open space as two areas have been cleared for a pavilion and possible barrier free playground. Ms. Ruggeri will contact Mr. Zeoli about the future status of Fred Wolfe Park as Open Space.

C. Fall/Winter Work Day

- A tentative date of November sixteenth, 2019 was selected for clean up at Housatonic Overlook. The workday will be from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- Ms. Ewen distributed a photo of the memorial benches that will be purchased for the Open Space. The cost is \$500 and the bench is made of stone with no back. The members were pleased with the simplicity of the bench and felt that it would work well in the Town's Open Space.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Satonick,
Recording Secretary