



ORANGE TOWN
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Orange Conservation Commission

January 2, 2022 7:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Approved Minutes

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Chair Sharon Ewen, Cindy Ruggeri, Cathy Anderson, Donna Wesolowski, Robert McCorkle, and Scott Somerville

Commissioners Absent: Santo Galatioto

Staff Present: Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

- Chair Ewen called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of the minutes was tabled until next month.

III. Financial Report

- Chairman Ewen reported that approximately 15% of the current budget has been spent. There was a brief discussion on purchasing additional signs for the properties, but it was agreed to look inside the storage closet before purchasing any new signs. It was also suggested putting up a sign for Work Day at High Plains Community Fairgrounds and a form from Town Hall must be completed one month in advance for permission to do so.
- The disarray of the Food Pantry was mentioned and Ms. Ruggeri suggested that the Town might consider purchasing some inexpensive shelving to organize the food and get it off the floor.
- Chairman Ewen requested a copy of the Maintenance Log to bring to the Board of Finance Budget Workshop on Friday. The Recording Secretary advised she would email the most recent log to Chairman Ewen. Ms. Ewen reviewed the proposed 2022-2023 budget with the Commission members, noting a slight increase in Supplies, Travel and

Training, and Maintenance. She also requested \$12k in the Capital Budget for stairs at Racebrook Tract. Other prospective projects were also mentioned at this time.

IV. Old Business

A. Turkey Hill Preserve Update

- The new trail will be getting yellow signage. Mr. Ross was to map the trail with the drone but the Commission has yet to hear back from him. Ms. Ruggeri will contact the State to update their maps. The Senior Leadership Map will be altered to add the “difficulty level” when they are reprinted. Fred Wolfe Park will also be removed as Open Space.

B. Kiosk Updates

- There was a lengthy conversation about the Kiosk updates at a variety of locations. It was agreed that all materials put in the kiosk should be laminated.

C. Jack Belfonti Eagle Scout Project

- Ms. Ewen advised Scott Belfonti to meet with the Wetlands Officer before actually beginning his Eagle Scout project.

D. Bench Request at Wepawaug

- Ms. Ewen advised that the Town has a moratorium limiting the number of benches in the Town of Orange. She suggested that an oak tree be planted in lieu of a bench. The Commission members however felt that the moratorium applies to Town property and not necessarily the Open Space. There was an ongoing discussion about the location and design of the bench. It was agreed that any potential bench must be bolted down.

E. Spring Bird Walk

- The Spring Bird Walk is scheduled for April 23th at Turkey Hill Preserve from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. They will ask Anthony Zemba about a possible rain date on April 30th. Chairman Ewen would like to have more programs and activities going forward to bring more people into the Open Space properties. She feels that with only seven people on the Commission a good amount of time is spent on maintenance. Mr. Somerville suggested that different Town departments should periodically meet to discuss the uses of the Open Space and to become better familiar with what the other departments are doing. The members all agreed that this was a good idea.

VI. Review of Standing Committees/Liaison Reports

- There are numerous Kiosks that are in need of repair. There was a lengthy discussion about the different locations and who would be available to do these repairs.

VII. Adjournment

- The Recording Secretary briefly explained the new requirements of Zoom meetings based on the Freedom of Information Act.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Satonick,
Recording Secretary