



Orange Conservation Commission

August 3, 2022 7:00 p.m.
High Plains Community Center

(Unapproved)

Attendance

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

Commissioners Absent: Chair Sharon Ewen and Santo Galatioto

Staff Present: Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Ms. Anderson made a motion to call the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m., seconded by Mr. Somerville. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

- Ms. Anderson reviewed emergency exits.

1. Review and Approval of Orange Conservation Commission Minutes – July 6, 2022

- Ms. Wesolowski noted one spelling correction in the minutes.

Ms. Wesolowski made a motion to approve the amended July 6, 2022 Orange Conservation Commission minutes, seconded by Mr. Somerville. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

2. Financial Report

- Discussion on the Financial Report was tabled until next month's meeting.

3. Old Business

A. Purchase of Signs

- There was a lengthy discussion on signage in the Open Spaces. Two "Stay on Main Trail" signs were ordered from East Coast Sign. They will be strategically located at Racebrook Tract. Ms. Anderson noted that hiking off the main trails could possibly result in a liability issue. She mentioned that Mr. Foyer has ample posts for their signs and will install them as needed. In addition, eight "Stay on Main Trail" signs were located in their storage closet and one will be posted at Turkey Hill Preserve and the other at Housatonic Overlook.

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- Ms. Ewen contacted Chief Gagne and he approved “This property under surveillance” signage. He also indicated that a juvenile police officer could be send out to residents that are misusing the trails with ATV vehicles if the addresses were provided.
- It was agreed that tie rod steps with gravel is both economical and aesthetically attractive. In addition, the Commission members felt that stone steps might be slippery when wet. The town has awarded \$12k for this project and Ms. Anderson will speak with Mr. Foyer as to the next step. It is unclear if the town will do the work or if they will go out to bid for an outside contractor.

B. Housatonic Overlook – Resident Complaint

- Upon investigation, this complaint needs to be handled through the Police Department as the teenagers are meeting at the end of the cul-de-sac, not in the Open Space. The resident has been advised to contact the Police Department.

C. Purple Martin Program

- Ms. Anderson will check the availability of the High Plains Cafeteria and provide available dates in March for this joint event with the Orange Land Trust. The program will be held either on a Tuesday or Wednesday in March.

D. Girl Scout Pamphlet

- Ms. Anderson, Ms. Ruggeri, and Ms. Ewen reviewed and approved the pamphlet that will be printed by the Girl Scout Troup. The brochure will be distributed at the Orange Country Fair, the library, and at High Plains Community Center. The Girl Scouts have been invited to visit and assist at their booth at the Orange Country Fair this year.

E. Orange Country Fair

- The Commission will have two booths and four tables set up for the fair. Preparations for the fair were discussed in detail. Like last year, Ms. Wesolowski will display photos submitted of people using the trails. The new display rack will be used at the fair to hold information pamphlets and maps of the trails. The Audubon Society will also have informational posters and pamphlets at the Fair and both the Owl Prowl and the Work Day will be advertised.
- Work Day is October 1st and the Owl Prowl is November 4th. Registration is required for the Owl Prowl via Eventbrite. This service is free if the program is also being offered for free. It was suggested that there be a 40 person limit for the Owl Prowl. Work Day will also be advertised in Orange Live.

F. Vote Officers

- The Commission nominated Ms. Anderson for Chairperson, Ms. Ewen for Vice Chairperson, and Mr. McCorkle for Secretary. Ms. Ewen requested to step down from Chairperson.

Ms. Wesolowski made a motion to approve Ms. Anderson for Chair, Ms. Ewen for Vice Chair, and

Mr. McCorkle as Secretary. Mr. Somerville seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

- Ms. Anderson will update all of the web information. Mr. McCorkle will compose a letter of resignation effective October 1st to First Selectman Zeoli and send a copy to Ms. Anderson. Ms. Wesolowski has been reappointed and has agreed to serve another four year term. In the future, the Commission members will be contacted in advance prior to the term expiration to determine if they wish to consider another term. It was also noted that all ex-members can participate in all of their activities. It was noted that there are a few potential candidates to replace Mr. McCorkle when he resigns.

4. New Business

A. Review of Properties

- Ms. Wesolowski noted that aphids are covering some of the trees at Wepawaug. While they might not be causing outright damage, she felt that the Commission should be aware of this. Ms. Anderson asked her to check the area again in a few weeks and give an update to the Commission next month. Ms. Wesolowski also mentioned that the steps at Wepawaug have been sprayed and need to be cleaned. Ms. Ruggeri thought that Mr. Foyer might have a cleaning spray to handle this problem.
- Ms. Ewen advised that three dogwood trees at Wepawaug need to be moved when the weather gets cooler. A large tree is down on the green trail at Racebrook Tract and this information will be relayed to Mr. Foyer. Ms. Wesolowski noted that at the intersection of the red/yellow trail at Housatonic Overlook there is an area that needs to be cut back. Mr. Somerville will go out to this area with tools and take care of the problem.
- Lastly, Ms. Ruggeri reviewed the updated list of properties that are of interest to the town. Currently, 756 Derby Milford Road, approximately 8.8 acres, might be of some interest to the town. In the past, letters were sent out to residents of these properties advising them that should they ever sell, to consider giving the town the first right of purchase.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m., seconded by Mr. Somerville. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Satonick,
Recording Secretary