

Branford Conservation and Environment Commission
P.O. Box 150
Branford Town Hall
Branford, Connecticut

MEETING

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, February 1, 2023
Branford Community Center, 30-48 Church St.
7:30 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Heather Wells-Sweeney, Neil Goodlad, Karyl Lee Hall, Christie Day (arrived late), Joshua Greenberg

Commissioners Absent: Karen Hannon, Patrick Sweeney, Cynde Jasek, Carol Kaminsky
Adrian Bonenberger

1. Approval of Minutes:

A. January 4, 2023

Joshua Greenberg made a motion to approve the January minutes as Amended.

Christie Day seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Karyl Lee Hall abstained.

2. Pollinator Pathway

3. Correspondence and Announcements

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney noted she sent a letter of support to the Branford Land Trust. They are applying for a grant to install a wheelchair accessible trail at Todd's Hill.

She also met with the Branford high School students Excel club and they are excited about starting a photo contest. This year will be the pilot. She will create a website that will cover the rules and logistics. We are using the Town of Bolton as the example since they have had a photo contest for 22 years.

She also met with BCA (Branford Cultural Alliance) a while back and they may be interested with collaborating with the commission to some degree. More details to follow.

Also, to note Bill Horne notified her that there are some encroachments on town property on Hillside Avenue so she did a site walk with Bill Horne and the steward from the Land Trust and did agree there are encroachments and the land trust is organizing a work day on February 25. There is litter there and English ivy that is encroaching from the neighbors. She will send a reminder email out for that event.

She then announced that Ivy from the Forest Commission started a seed library at Blackstone Library. More information is on the Blackstone Library website as well as our Facebook page.

The last announcement she made was that she attended a virtual coffee hour thru Sustainable Connecticut about the mini liquor bottles (nip bottles). There is a 10cent surcharge on the mini liquor bottles which the towns get returned to them. Branford got its first disbursement a few months ago that was \$22,000.

She then spoke of the problem of litter. She said the purpose of the coffee hour was to speak with other towns and find out how they were using those funds.

The goal is to use the funds to address the litter problem. She suggested installing screens in the storm basins to catch the litter before it gets to the waterways. The commission discussed this

briefly.

4. New Business: Nothing was discussed.

5. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2019 - year to date
Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney first reviewed the purchases that the Commission made such as : the fencing that was put around the trees that were planted in the parks.

She then reviewed the proposed expenses such as signage for the pollinator pathways locations. Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to approve purchasing metal medallions for the pollinator pathway locations.

Christie Day seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The next item discussed was memberships to various groups such as Ct Audubon Society and Native Plant Trust, etc. and the cost and benefits of each one.

The photo contest was discussed briefly and possibly making a calendar with the winning photos.

Earth day is coming up on April 15 and she suggested taking out an ad for that as well as printing flyers.

The commission then discussed whether to give away trees at Earth Day like they did last year. Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney spoke of the pros and cons of doing this. They spoke of possibility getting feedback from people as to how their tree is doing if they decide to give away trees.

The commission Tabled this item to the next meeting.

Also mentioned was the Natural Resource Inventory and that it has a separate account with funds for that. She suggested getting a vernal pool survey noting that Patrick Sweeney spoke to someone at Yale which they can hire to do it. It would then be included in the Natural Resource Inventory. The commission agreed that a current vernal pool survey is needed.

**Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to approve no more than 500.00 for these time sensitive expenses: A newspaper ad and pamphlets for Earth Day
Membership fee for the upcoming conference in March**

As well as the approval of the Vernal Pool Survey (which has a separate account).

Joshua Greenberg seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to purchase the medallions for the Pollinator Pathway sites.

Christie Day seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

6. Continuing Business:

- A. Permits for coastal projects- Nothing was discussed.
- B. Proposed developments and other building projects-Nothing new to discuss.
- C. Invasive plant control –Nothing was discussed
- D. Natural Resource Inventory (next publication 2023)

Christie Day noted she spoke with Laura Green who runs her own ecology company. She is interested in working on this. She will speak to her again and follow up. Christie also spoke to Rick Canabond with Ty & Bon Engineers. She would like to use a full service Engineer firm but it is expensive. She will follow up with him again. She spoke of their qualifications.

E. Branford Festival-Nothing was discussed.

F. Earth Day

Chair Heather Wells Sweeney said she is working on children's activities and she is encouraging the other vendors to have hands on activities as well.

G. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)

Karyl Lee Hall recapped the Crabbing Bridge project on Rt. 146 and noted she attended a meeting with the co-chair of Guilford of the Scenic Roads Committee and they made some suggestions regarding the project planning. They also suggested that the planners look at the old plan for some guidance.

She will report back to the commission when she gets info from the co-chair of Guilford.

7. Reports:

- A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition
- B. Library books donations – Nothing was discussed
- C. Spill reports- None
- D. Contaminated sites - None
- E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing was discussed
- F. Website

Chair Heather Wells Sweeney has been working with Debi in IT to iron out details and get more information on it. The town may get a new platform for the website and that may change the amount of content we can put on our page.

8. Other:

- A. Tweed Airport Expansion

Chair Heather Wells Sweeney noted she attended the RTM meeting to state for the record that the commission sent a letter to the FAA regarding the Tweed Airport expansion. Other groups spoke as well and in conclusion the request for an environmental impact statement did not pass.

9. Adjournment- The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm

Submitted by: M. Martin (Clerk)