

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

## ***MEETING MINUTES***

**WEDNESDAY, March 6, 2024**

**Branford Community Center, 30-48 Church St., Activity Room**

**7:00 P.M.**

**or via Zoom with the link below if unable to attend.**

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Heather Wells -Sweeney, Carol Kaminsky,  
Patrick Sweeney, Joshua Greenberg, Karen Hannon

Commissioners Absent: Neil Goodlad, Karyl Lee Hall, Christie Day, Adrian Bonenberg

1. Approval of minutes:

A. February 7, 2024

C.Kaminsky made a motion to accept the minutes with the edits discussed.  
P. Sweeney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Correspondence and Announcements:

Chairperson Wells Sweeney told the commission there was an upcoming meeting via zoom on March 8 at 11 am re: "neonicks", the pesticide in plant material. She will send out an email with more details if anyone is interested.

3. New Business:

A. Invitation from CFC to attend a Special Meeting of the CFC to discuss a collaboration with CFC, Open Space Commission, and BCEC to recommend a strategy for the Town to form a comprehensive forest management plan.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney asked the commission if anyone would like to attend this meeting. The commission discussed this briefly and P. Sweeney volunteered to be a point person if needed.

4. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2024 - year to date

Chairperson Wells Sweeney displayed the budget and reviewed the money spent so far this year in the various categories.

5. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects---None

B. Proposed developments and other building project

The clerk, Michelle Martin, mentioned there were a few applications submitted to the planning & zoning office for the redevelopment of the old Regal Cinema site. No public dates have been set yet. More

information to follow.

- C. Invasive plant control---Nothing was discussed
- D. Pollinator Pathway ---Nothing was discussed
- E. Earth Day Fair will be Saturday, April 27**  
??Annual Litter Pick Up??  
--Businesses & Volunteer Organizations

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that she needs a volunteer to send letters out to local businesses asking for help on the litter pick up day. She then asked the commissioners for other ideas of businesses to contact for additional help. She also reminded the commission that the litter clean-up day will remain the same as the Earth Day celebration.

**F. Branford Festival Saturday, June 15**

Chairperson Wells Sweeney reminded the commission that help is needed that day since they have many plants to distribute.

- G. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)—Nothing was discussed.
- H. Farm River coalition- Nothing was discussed.

6. Reports:

- A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition- None
- B. Library books donations  
Carol Kaminsky said the total for all the library books was \$624.31 and she reviewed how many books went to each school.
- C. Spill reports---- None
- D. Contaminated sites---- None
- E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing was discussed.
- F. Website  
Chairperson Wells Sweeney said she is working on some final edits.

5. Continuing Business:

- A. Natural Resource Inventory  
--Open Space Index  
--Remaining \$5000 (minus OSI)

This item was skipped awaiting Christie Day's arrival so she can give the group an update.

Christie Day arrived at 8:07 pm and said when she asked GZA the cost to add and index to the NRI, it would be \$1500.00. She noted the NRI with the index would still allow funds in the budget left over.

She said the NRI is largely complete, and she would like to publicize it with a webinar during normal working hours. She will compile a list of people to invite and also put it on the commission's website.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted there is money left over in the capital fund for the NRI. She asked the commission if they wanted to

add anything to the NRI. She reviewed the list of services offered by GZA and their fees. She suggested perhaps getting more information on vernal field studies and the commission agreed. She will email them any information she gets.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney suggested keeping the budget the same for next year. After a brief discussion, the commission agreed.

7. Budget: Spending this FY

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that funds may need to be transferred from one account to another. She will work with finance for guidance. She then reviewed the commissions prior goals and possible projects that they talked about at a prior meeting. The commission discussed this briefly.

She also suggested printing more brochures for the pollinator pathway.

Patrick Sweeney talked about possible signs for the pollinator pathway. The group decided to hire someone to assist with the signage. Patrick volunteered to form a digital product.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney asked the group about goals and what they would like to accomplish and what action steps they can take to achieve them.

The commission had a brief discussion.

She then asked for suggestions for topics they could get a speaker for. One suggestion was : learning how to turn a lawn into a natural habitat. J. Greenberg offered to look into that for the commission. They then discussed the possibility of planting more trees and possible locations that need more trees.

The commission then discussed the possibility of developing a Forest Management plan for parcels that are owned by the town that aren't being cared for.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney suggested starting a forest management plan for one parcel to start with. The commission agreed it was a good idea. Patrick Sweeney explained the process of working with a Forester and what they would do ,etc. He volunteered to look into pricing for that.

The commission decided it would compose a list of the properties in town that aren't being managed and perhaps develop a plan for those parcels down the road.

Christie Day arrived, and the commission went back to the Natural Resource Inventory item.

8. Other:

A. April Meeting date

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted she has to go before the Ways and Means Committee so the April meeting will be moved to April 4.

B. Tweed Airport Expansion- Nothing was discussed

9. Adjournment- the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm