

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting, Thursday, 7/6/23 at 7:15 P.M

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 884 9174 8703

Passcode: 919705

1. Call to Order-meeting called to order at 7:20 p.m.
Present: Tatiana Schreiber (chair), Kathy Kingston, Sarah Waldo, Kestrel Craig, Rachael Shaw (secretary).
2. Adjustments to Agenda: none
3. Acceptance of Minutes: 5/25/23 –minutes read and accepted by unanimous consent. Rachael will post these minutes to the Google drive.
4. Communications and Public Comment: none
5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) –
 - a) Invasive species brochure – Decision made to remove this from the agenda until a member has more time.
 - b) Website for Conservation Commission –Sarah will attend a Selectboard meeting and advocate for improving our website experience. Sarah will check out other towns conservation commission websites (Putney, Dummerston, Rockingham) to get ideas on how ours could be more interactive and engaging.
 - c) BEEC/Broadreach proposal –Planning subgroup (Linda Huebner(director of BEEC), Patti Smith, Michael Daley, Kathy Kingston and Sarah Waldo) met in late June. Halifax and Westminster have received grant money to spend on beaver

educational programs and a new flow device for each town. There is a Beaver Working Group (BWG) from each town, and multiple educational programs and activities are planned for June-October 2023, extending into 2024 if needed. The BWG will have a preliminary meeting on July 25, and then follow up with [from the Broadreach Project Summary] “a meeting with the road crew to learn about where current and past conflict sites are, find out what their concerns are, and to let them know about the opportunity to work with Denise Burchsted to assess beaver dam hazards. BWG will let the road crew know about Broad Reach funding to install a beaver deceiver at a conflict site and get their input on where it would be most helpful.” The WCC enthusiastically supports the grant and its associated activities/projects, and looks forward to assisting as needed.

d) Continue comments on Natural Resources section of TP : Made some solid progress during meeting. Will continue at next meeting.

e) Comments on Agriculture section of TP -Everyone commits to look at the AG section (on Google Drive in Shared with Me section) and make comments, we can discuss them at our next meeting on August 3.

6. New Business:

a) CC involvement in ash tree survey, re Emerald Ash Borer - Kestrel has begun the online course on forest pests. Course is being run by Ginger Nickerson (outreach person of the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry program). Sarah mentioned that Oliver Brody is willing to be part of the survey team. Any undertaking should start with asking Chuck which roads should be prioritized. We need to determine project priorities (add to agenda for next meeting) and whether we want to undertake this project. If we were to take it on, we would want to chat with other CC's (such as Dummerston) to ask about their process. It would be a good job for a little team of volunteers on electric bikes!

- b) Brief report-back Higgins dam removal- Many different parties are involved from all over the state. Surveyors, state scientists, and officials connected with water resources, fisheries, soils, plants, water levels, archeology were present. Planning to move ahead with removing the rest of that dam, restore some shoreline, and improve access that won't cause erosion. At the earliest, things will move ahead in Spring of 2024. They may have a public program so that people can understand the process.
7. Other Business: Add to agenda for next meeting: rate 3 or 4 projects in terms of priority, and talk about timelines, resources needed.
 8. Date of Next Meeting: 8/3/23. 7:15 Location, TBD. We will not hold a meeting in late August for a summer break.
 9. Adjournment at 8:35 pm.
Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rachael Shaw, secretary.