

NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION ZOOM MEETING DRAFT MINUTES: 19 October 2021

Members Present: Craig Layne (chair), Lynnwood Andrews, Cheryl Asa (via Zoom), David Hubbard (via Zoom), Suzanne Leiter, Chris Rimmer

Guests: None

Meeting convened at 7:08 PM

Craig asked if there were any public comments but no one from the public was present.

The Trails Committee has prepared a request to the Selectboard to change the classification of the portion of Burton Woods Road between Bragg Hill Road and the Griggs Mountain ridge from "Fourth-Class Road" to "Trail". Designation as a trail would allow use by off-road vehicles of up to 1,200 lbs., but use of heavier vehicles would require written permission and be contingent on repair of any damage to the drainage in the right of way. There would be no change to access by motorized vehicles on the western side of the ridge. The Trails Committee has asked the Conservation Commission to consider recommending this request. Following discussion, with the understanding that time for public comment will be provided as part of the process when the Selectboard considers the request, Chris moved to approve supporting the request, Cheryl seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

David reported that annual budget requests now require inclusion of a written justification for each line item. Each budget line was reviewed and David was provided cost estimates of each planned activity. David will complete the proposed budget in the new format and submit it to the Selectboard.

Lynnwood gave an update on work in the Milt Frye Nature Area. She has spoken with all the abutting owners, who have agreed to having invasive plants removed along the edges of their property that border the Nature Area. DPW will be mowing the meadow within the next month and has agreed to once annual mowing in the fall, to foster growth of native plants that support pollinators and other wildlife. In response to the NCC request that the Nature Area no longer be used for Town fireworks displays, the Brookmead Nature Area will be the site for fireworks associated with Nordic Nights. NCC has been asked to look into whether fireworks noise is a significant disturbance to wildlife.

Chris reported on progress with phragmites removal. Redstart treated the patch in the Ompompanoosuc River late last month. Since two treatments are required to completely eliminate phragmites, this patch will need re-treatment next year. The Beaver Meadow Rd phragmites area that was treated earlier this year will also need re-treatment next year. David commented that he had recently seen a patch of phragmites near the intersection of Tucker Hill Rd and Kate Wallace Rd. That area will probably need treatment next year as well.

Cheryl gave an update on the bear outreach program. There is no information yet on the state's new bear biologist who is supposed to start sometime in October. MCS third-graders are working on models about bears that will be displayed in the Library.

Lynnwood moved to approve the September minutes, Chris seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12PM.

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Asa