



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Conservation
Commission

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Regular Meeting

Monday, August 15, 2022

2nd Floor Room at the THOMPSON TOWN HALL Hybrid meeting via ZOOM:

1. Call to Order

Meeting Called to Order by Norma O'Leary at 7:00 PM.

Present: Norma O'Leary, Carol Smith, Peter Cummins, Dave Clark.

Staff: Dan Malo (Conservation Agent), Heather Gauthier (Recording Secretary)

Guests: Pat Cheever, John Rice, Amy St. Onge (First Selectman)

2. Approval of Minutes – July 18, 2022

Carol Smith moved, and Peter Cummins seconded the motion to accept the minutes from the July 18th regular meeting. The motion approved 4-0-0.

3. Financial Matters

No report was reviewed. There have only been salary payments for Dan Malo and Heather Gauthier. There will be a purchase for the cabinet and a membership renewal (both to be discussed below).

4. Correspondence

a. Members received via email:

- July 18th, 2022 – Meeting Minutes
- August 2022, Agent Report
- Forested Wetlands Soils Workshops in August & September – These are 1-day workshops with (5) different dates to choose from. The cost to attend is \$25. Please let Dan know if you are interested.

b. Incoming Mail: None

c. Outgoing Mail: None

d. Incoming Mail via email:

- Announcement – Habitat Newsletter is back in circulation notice.
- Conservation CT Land Use emails.

e. Outgoing Mail via email: None

5. Conservation Officer Report (Dan Malo)

- **Flashing Sign at Town Hall:** The sign is available for groups or commissions to use. The commission should consider using the sign to recognize Phil Thomas time on the commission.
- **Special Town Meeting:** All (3) proposed ordinances passed. The first ordinance lowered the size of the recreation commission by (1) member. The second ordinance is MS-4 (stormwater). The third ordinance is regarding PA-490 Open Space.
- **Hazardous Waste Day:** This was held on 7/25/2022, there were 159 vehicles with a total cost to the town of \$14,875. The waste collected was contracted out (the items were not sorted in-house).
- **Neglected Cemeteries Grant:** We are still awaiting an announcement for grant opening. Information is being gathered for the grant to be applied for when it is available. The current grant for Wilsonville Cemetery will expire in November and work is scheduled to be complete by then. The commission should be expecting an invoice for the work that is done.
- **Bluebird nesting boxes:** We have given out 34 boxes and are awaiting 14 more to be picked up. This year there was 53 boxes in total were requested, which is the highest

number of boxes since 2017. The commission gives thanks to the effort of Bernie Davis, Dave Clark, Dave Eddy, and Norma O'Leary for coordination, material donations and time assembling of the nesting boxes so we could meet the demand. Boxes can be left up all year, but old nests should be cleaned out at the end of the season. Pictures of the boxes are requested. A suggestion was made to see if Hull Forest Products still produces template kits in bulk. Norma O'Leary has offered to write an article for local newspapers and include some recent photos of bluebirds that she has.

- **Draft Subdivision Regulation Revisions:** Marla Butts intends to meet with the town planner and select-board to discuss her concerns about the draft subdivision regulations. Marla Butts is still intending to give a presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission, the date for the presentation is to be determined.
- **Selectman's Update Article Due:** The deadline to submit information to be included in the update is 8/18/2022. This update will include the success of the bluebird nesting boxes with thanks given to those who made the program such a success. There is space on the page for other conservation information.
- **Commission Membership:** Pat Cheever has applied to be on the commission. Her application will be presented at the next Selectmen Meeting. This will fill all seats on the conservation commission.
- **P&Z Subcommittee Meeting:** There is a meeting tonight to discuss annual updates to the Zoning regulations.
- **DEEP Offering Forested Wetlands Soils Field Workshop:** UConn and Session Woods WMA are hosting workshops. The cost to attend is \$25 and there are (5) dates to choose from.
- **Resignation for Phil Thomas' Time on the Commission:** Norma O'Leary spoke with Amy St. Onge about having something come from the town as Phil served on multiple boards. There should be some sort of specific mention on the conservation commission since Phil did a great deal of work for the commission.
- **Wildlife Crossing Signs:** Troop D has not provided any information on accidents involving animals in town; there is a request into the record division. There are (4) pairs of signs left to be installed. Consideration should be given to have signs placed on Wilsonville Road and Quaddick Town Farm Road.
- **Development Inquiry about 221 Ballard Road:** Property owner called and spoke with Marla Butts about building at the rear of their property. At the rear of the property is 5-acre easements from Conservation as well as CT light and power and Wetlands easements. The property map was reviewed with a discussion by commission members. Easements were created for permanent protection of the area and easements are not reversible. The property owners should contact a land use attorney if they want to pursue removing the easement.
- **Discussion of ZOOM/Hybrid Meetings:** The commission decided to continue with ZOOM meetings.
- **Wetlands Recording Secretary:** Dan Malo is still the recording secretary until a replacement is found.
- **Quaddick Town Farm Road:** There was a brush fire on the Boy Scout land on 8/6/2022. This is the same area of previous Wetland complaints and notices. Connecticut DEEP is investigating the cause of the fire and will forward results to the town fire marshal.
- **Easements on Ballard Road and Donovan Drive:** Some easements are not depicted on the map software. The contractor/property owner, Jason Lavalley, has been informed of these easements as they are not shown on the AppGeo GIS map. Dan Malo and Jason Lavalley will meet to finalize the easements.
- **Thompson Litter League:** Thompson Recreation has organized this program, and they have (8) sponsors including bankHometown, The Last Green Valley, and Jezierski Plumbing & Heating.

- **Review of Conservation Easements:** Properties on the West side of Quaddick on Hiawatha and Arrowhead Drive were inspected; no medallions were noticed. There are about (7) lots that are mostly overgrown with no indications of disturbance.
- **Shared Storage Cabinet:** Wetlands and Conservation Commissions have set aside a total of \$800 to purchase a shared cabinet. The cabinet will be used to store larger items such as EZ-up Tent, GPS equipment, and other sensitive items in the Conservation/Wetlands office. The purchase should be finalized soon.
- **Grants Awarded for Statewide Projects:** The State Bond Commission has approved multiple grants; \$10 Million for the Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program; \$15 Million for investment into State Park infrastructure; and \$9 Million for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Program. Thompson would be eligible for some of the grants.
- **Matching Funds with CT Conservation Partnership Program:** This program would allow applicants who apply to the state OSWA Grant Program, to apply for a federal grant through Connecticut Land Conservation Council as a source for the matching funds.
- **Open Space Target Properties:** There is a property on Messier Road "Randof Property", between the town-owned and Wyndham Land Trust Bull Hill Recreation locations. This property has 117-acres and would link two established trail systems. This property would be ideal as a target property for the town to have ownership of. Discussion on the interest and possible acquisition of this property by the town or Wyndham Land Trust.
- **Ron Tillen's Aerial Photographs:** There was photographs taken by Ron Tillen in 2004. They are possibly held at the Thompson Historical Society and/or the Wyndham Land Trust.
- **Gravestone Girls:** The recreation department held a Kids Camp Gravestone Cleaning at the Joslin Cemetery. There were 12 middle schoolers in attendance on 7/21/2022. The Gravestone Girls will be hosting a 3-part historical and genealogical presentation for adults in September; the cost is \$90/residents and \$100 non-residents. Norma O'Leary questioned the pricing.
- **Possible Map Themes for MapGeo GIS interface:** The AppGeo mapping system is being used in the basic function. There are themes that can be used as an overlay such as cemetery locations, historic homes, monuments, recreational trails (in addition to other information such as fire hydrants, FEMA flood plains, snowplow/sweeping routes, etc). Commission members should let Dan Malo know if there are any maps that they would like to see in the current program. There could be additional costs if additional themes are used. Thompson's AppGeo program can be found at: <https://thompsonct.mapgeo.io/datasets/properties>
- **North Grosvenordale Possible Burial Site:** Dan Malo has reached out to the State Archeologist, Sarah Sportman, and Connecticut Gravestone Network, Ruth Shapleigh-Brown, to inquire on the process to verify and enclose the possible burial site. This site is at the North Grosvenordale Pond behind the K of C. There has been no updates on development of the site from the developers. There is Algae bloom at the North Grosvenordale site.
- **Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions:** CACIWC is hosting the Fall 2022 Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference on October 29, 2022. The annual membership for the shared Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands Commission membership is due. The total membership cost is \$120 of which \$60 is due from the Conservation Commission. The Habitat Newsletter is available and was left for Commission members. **Dave Clark moved, and Carol Smith seconded the motion to authorize payment of the \$60 to renew the membership. The motion approved 4-0-0.**
- **Agenda:** Norma O'Leary questioned how the agenda is produced, distributed and old business items. Currently Dan Malo produces the agenda and brings that to the town clerk for posting. Dan Malo and Heather Gauthier will discuss the filing of the agenda. Norma O'Leary advised that the commission should have an election of positions at the next meeting.

6. Old Business

- Bluebird Nesting Boxes. Discussed previously in the agent's report.
- Storage Cabinet Appropriation. Discussed previously in the agent's report.
- North Grosvenordale Pond - Possible Burial Site. Discussed previously in the agent's report.

7. New Business:

- Ballard Road Easement. Discussed previously in the agent's report.
- Butterfly Corridor (Carol Smith). The garden is on the side of the selectman side of the Thompson Town Hall.

8. Citizens' Comments

- John Rice, 39 East Thompson Road, President of East Thompson Cemetery. John Rice read from the July 15 minutes #9 Comment by Dave Clark. John advised the commission that the East Thompson Cemetery is a private cemetery. Discussion was held about Town-Owned vs. Private Cemeteries.

9. Members' Forum

- Norma O'Leary. The president of the Historical Society toured 10 of the 24 town cemeteries with Norma. He is putting on a program with the town on the neglected cemeteries. They were able to get an interview with the worker who is working on the Wilsonville Cemetery, Mark Parker.

10. Announcements

- Sidewalk work is underway and should be completed by September.
- Foodie Food Truck Festival, September 10th at Riverside Park.

11. Next Meeting is Monday, September 19, 2022, at 7pm (hybrid).

12. Meeting adjourned by Norma O'Leary at 8:34 PM.

View the Zoom Recording

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/86EwUZBzrnVWmPkSpKFQFGPPtu0ngeWln00z2Zy9iy0z8jnMilFShX10PIY7p4U.4KNweyZ6VQICS1sg>

Passcode: ^bB4yR@2

Submitted 08/21/2022

Heather J. Gauthier

Recording Secretary

*** These minutes have not yet been approved by the Conservation Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.*