

BOS Preserve Ad Hoc Committee Minutes 1/25/2018



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Board of Selectmen

The Preserve Ad Hoc Committee

Susan Esty
Chris Cryder
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Judy Preston
Liz Swenson
Tom ODell
Kacey Constable

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, January 25, 2018

6:00 – 7:30 P.M.

PARKS & RECREATION CENTER

308 Main Street, Old Saybrook, CT 06475

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ray Allen called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present

Chris Cryder
Judy Preston
Kathy Connolly
Susan Esty
Kacey Constable
Liz Swenson (arrived at 7:00 p.m.)

Members Absent

Tom ODell

Town Hall Staff Present

Ray Allen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Kathleen King, Recording Clerk

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the minutes from the Board of Selectmen's Preserve Ad-Hoc Committee Special Meeting of December 21, 2017 as presented. **MADE** by S. Esty; **SECONDED** by J. Preston; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** J. Preston, S. Esty, K. Constable, K. Connolly, C. Cryder; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

IV. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Bob Nussbaum from the Essex Land Trust was in attendance.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on Interim Trails

R. Allen distributed a draft update on interim trails dated 11/22/17 which shows an extension of the yellow trail.

C. Cryder had asked about trail signage. The CMC met on 1/23/18, and they believe the blue and yellow trails are confusing to the hiker, so they would like to make a change to the yellow and blue loop trails, so a part of the yellow trail would become a red and yellow trail. Also, along a part of the blue trail, they would like to create a blue and white trail. C. Cryder said the State Trails' Committee made these suggestions. C. Cryder said this is an interim, temporary trail system. The trails could be changed in time especially after the results of the biodiversity study have been completed.

R. Allen said markers will be purchased and paid for through the Parks and Recreation budget. C. Cryder suggested the signs be purchased through the vendor Essex uses to keep the signs consistent.

C. Cryder is working with the boy scouts in Troop 51 in creating wayfinding signs. The signs will have to be changed because of the trail color change and the new parking lot.

It was also suggested that different safety rules be printed on the back of the trail map.

C. Cryder was out walking the trails today, and he is concerned about finding new ATV activity from the Schoolhouse Road area. He asked R. Allen for more signs prohibiting ATVs.

Alex Sokolov from the State of CT, who is in charge of the recreational use of State parks and forests, walked through the Preserve today with K. Connolly and R. Allen. He had concerns about some of the signage particularly the large size of the sponsorship sign. He would like to be more involved with signage in the Preserve in the future.

A. Sokolov agreed the part of the trail near the bog that's always wet should be raised. K. Connolly plans to put in an application for a Natural Diversity Data Base which is run by the CT DEEP that marks locations of plants and animals. The purpose of it is so there is a record of where things are located. In order to make a change in a state forest, you have to submit the NDDB to be sure you're allowed to make a change. Once things are cleared with the NDDB, the Committee has permission to make the change near the bog.

R. Allen said the trail near the board walk area has to be moved. If trails are changed and they have bridges or footpaths, they have to be horse sustainable to be safe for horses. There are standards in place for that.

There was discussion about preserving vernal pools when moving trails.

B. Update on Winter Weed Treatment

K. Connolly reported that she is hoping to have another work party in early March. She's monitoring the Japanese Barberry so it can be whacked down immediately. She said the area looks clean right now.

C. RFP (Request for Proposal) Update

R. Allen distributed 1/23/18 Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Management Committee. They voted to move forward with the RFP. The RFP will be posted/opened on 1/29/18 and closed on 2/15/18. There are no dates at this point in time for reviewing and awarding the RFP.

D. Map Update

This was discussed under Update on Interim Trails

E. Committee Updates

S. Esty who is part of the Signage Committee was working on signage for "trail etiquette." This encompasses rules of the trail, right of way, respecting private property, passing on the left, no motorized vehicles, etc. She felt trail etiquette is a nice language alternative to "do not, you must not" language. Some of the signs are international. She will bring a compiled list of the signs for Committee members to review for the next Preserve meeting.

K. Connolly said there is a drop off in the utility right of way where a danger sign should be posted.

K. Constable and J. Preston were working on what it takes to run a bio-blitz. They said they anticipate it will take roughly a year of preparation. They think it would be very advantageous for one of them to participate on a bio-blitz committee to see what the planning process entails. A bio-blitz would educate the public and encourage people to go out to The Preserve.

F. Any Other Old Business

There was no other Old Business.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Parking Lot on Ingham Hill Road

The CMC has not yet directed anyone to proceed on the parking lot on Ingham Hill Road.

R. Allen will ask C. Fortuna for an update about the parking lot. He will also ask C. Fortuna where the proceeds went from the sale of the house on Bokum Road.

MOTION to request that the Conservation Management Committee put a priority on the construction of the Ingham Hill Road parking lot to the Preserve in this budget cycle July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019. **MADE** by S. Esty; **SECONDED** by L. Swenson; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** J. Preston, S. Esty, K. Constable, K. Connolly, L. Swenson, C. Cryder; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

B. Any Other New Business

J. Preston gave Committee members a Baseline Survey and Inventory of the Rare Plants, Critical Habitats and Significant Natural Communities of The Preserve, Old Saybrook, Essex and Westbrook, CT.

J. Preston created a draft job description for the Land Steward position for The Preserve which includes a position summary, duties and responsibilities, qualifications and education and/or experience. She asked Committee members to review it and give input and feedback at the next Preserve meeting.

There was discussion about whether or not this would be a contractual position, a seasonal position, a part time or full time position, or a paid internship position. There was also a suggestion to inquire about applying for funds from the Trust for Public Land to pay for this position.

J. Preston suggested Committee members write down their top 3-5 general, broad priorities, in order, for the Preserve, with a short explanation and bring them to the next Preserve meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. The next meeting of The Preserve Ad Hoc Committee will be on Thursday, February 27, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Building, 308 Main Street.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk