
BOS Preserve Ad Hoc Committee Minutes 3/23/2017

TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Board of Selectmen

Susan Esty
Chris Cryder
Kathleen Connolly

The Preserve Ad Hoc Committee

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Judy Preston
Liz Swenson
Tom ODell
Kacey Constable

MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, March 23, 2017

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 6:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present

Chris Cryder
Kathy Connolly
Susan Esty
Kacey Constable (arrived at 6:13 p.m.)
Tom ODell (arrived at 6:13 p.m.)
Judy Preston (arrived at 6:53 p.m.)
Liz Swenson (arrived at 7:03 p.m.)

Town Hall Staff Present

Ray Allen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Sandy Prisloe, Environmental Planner
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 January 26, 2017 as presented. **MADE** by S. Esty, **SECONDED** by K. Connolly, **VOTED IN FAVOR:** K. Connolly, K. Constable, C. Cryder, T. ODell, S. Esty; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

IV. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Robert Nussbaum from the Essex Land Trust was in attendance as was Honor Lawler from the Trust for Public Land.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mission Statement

C. Cryder had nothing new to report on the mission statement itself, but he focused on goals and public usage of the Preserve which he will talk about under New Business.

William Hochholzer, Forestry Supervisor, DEEP Forestry, would like more specific information for the Request for Proposal about what this Committee would to see for public usage of the Preserve.

K. Connolly suggested that it be noted in the public usage statement, that the public uses requested are for this particular time and they can be changed at a future time.

R. Allen distributed the mission statement submissions from K. Connolly, C. Cryer, himself and S. Esty.

K. Connolly suggested the three objectives in the mission statement need to include protection of water, wildlife and their habitats and passive recreation. Those are the three things consistent with each Committee members' mission statement. She also requested recreation be specified as passive recreation versus active recreation in the mission statement. After much discussion, Committee members agreed on the following as The Board of Selectmen Preserve Ad Hoc Committee mission statement.

"The mission of the Preserve's Stewards is to protect and enhance the forest's diversity of regional native plant and animal life, its cultural assets, safeguard its ground and surface water and provide a range of educational opportunities and passive recreation for forest visitors".

MOTION to approve the following mission statement, "The mission of the Preserve's Stewards is to protect and enhance the forest's diversity of regional native plant and animal life, its cultural assets, safeguard its ground and surface water and provide a range of educational opportunities and passive recreation for forest visitors." **MADE** by K. Connolly; **SECONDED** by S. Esty; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** K. Connolly, K. Constable, C. Cryder, T. ODeil, S. Esty; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

B. Update on Interim Trails

C. Cryder reported that there are a number of new trails on the Eastern side of the Preserve and the Center part of the Preserve that were cleared by mountain biker groups. C. Cryder went out to dismantle these trails by raking leaves onto the trails and moving twigs onto the trails when he found mountain bikers using them. He explained to the mountain bikers why he was doing this, and he asked them if they'd like to work with this Committee on trail systems. Signs are being

put up to deter creation of single track trails by the mountain bikers. The signs also ask that if people would like to be involved in the trail system, to please contact the Parks and Recreation Office.

R. Nussbaum said Essex is having the same difficulty with mountain bikers creating single track trails, and he would like to use the same signs Old Saybrook is using to be consistent.

Eagle Scout Candidate Matthew Alsante put in a request for wayfarer signs in The Preserve. He is requesting \$250.00 for lumber. R. Allen said he can help M. Alsante with this funding.

There will be a work party in the Preserve on Saturday, April 22, 2017 with Clarkson University Alumni.

On Sunday, April 23, 2017, C. Cryder will lead an Earth Day hike in The Preserve from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

C. Cryder will lead a CT Trails Day Hike in The Preserve on Saturday, June 3, 2017 as well.

K. Connolly would like to request a footbridge by the Red Trail next to the swamp in the area where there's a big dip or low point. Bikes have ground up the soil in this area. C. Cryder said there are a lot of Eagle Scout Candidates interested in Eagle Scout projects, and he said he will see if one would like to construct this footbridge.

C. Update on Winter Weed Treatment

K. Connolly said there were 2 work days with about 20 people each day. She said the weather was beautiful. The work groups whacked weed plants and picked up sticks. There were about 9 invasive species to whack. They created wildlife houses.

K. Connolly suggested possibly having one more work day possibly around Earth Day with more stick pick up.

K. Connolly feels strongly that a certain amount of re-vegetation has to be done. She's been doing research on re-seeding of native grasses and sedges. The herbicides that have been used do not negatively impact native grasses and sedges. It is a selective herbicide. She's researching prices on the seeds and creating a list.

D. Committee Updates

There were no committee updates.

E. Any Other Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Goals and Public Usage of the Preserve

C. Cryder spoke to W. Hochholzer yesterday. W. Hochholzer said what is lacking in the Request for Proposal are clear deliverables regarding access and public usage. He would like more specific detail. He suggested getting public input on access and public usage through a survey. The Preserve is not technically a “forest” or a “park” rather it’s a hybrid.

Wildlife Division is willing to do removal of phragmites in the bog. However, when the Wildlife Division does the removal, they need to find funds for that. They get funding through the State or through the Town. H. Lawler said the Trust for Public Land would be able to fund this as well.

K. Connolly said the other option is to hire a company such as All Habitat to remove the phragmites.

R. Allen said if the Committee submits an application to the Trust for Public Land, funding could be attained that way as well which would hasten the time the phragmites could be treated.

C. Cryder asked W. Hochholzer about producing revenue. He said revenue generation is not a goal for The Preserve but rather a secondary by-product of sustainable forestry practices. The Preserve can benefit from sustainable forestry meaning a balance of aged class trees. The overriding goal is a healthy forest with a balance of age classes; biodiversity should be preserved and enhanced.

C. Cryder distributed an Ad Hoc Committee Priorities Questionnaire which incorporates the following sections: Committee Issues & Public Participation, Financial, Preserve Trails & Potential Public Uses and Forest and Habitat Management. He asked Committee members to rate each question as directed in the survey. He thinks it will help this Committee think more specifically about public uses. He asked for Committee comments, etc.

B. Any Other New Business

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m. The next meeting of The Preserve Ad Hoc Committee will be on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Building, 308 Main Street.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk