

Minutes for the 31 August, 2022 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

Call Meeting to Order: Meeting called to order at 18:30 by Jennifer Tuthill

Members present: Jennifer Tuthill, Ernie Lamos, Merry Ruggirello, Rosie Homer, and Steve Whitman

Excused: Tom Guilmette

Absent:

BOS Representative: Bob Piehler

Guests: Douglas Sirotnak

Approve Minutes from 27 July, 2022 Meeting: **Bob made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, 2nd by Merry. Minutes were approved unanimously.**

Financials: 2022 Operating Budget Balance as of August 31, \$1061.92

There is \$7.00 due the Commission as the result of property being removed from "current use" status.

Permits: None

Old Business

1. Status of survey for Turtle Preserve lot, and new Town Forest lot: Colin Brown has agreed to put surveying of these plots on his schedule for this summer. He will look into what information he needs and get back to us with an estimate as to the costs. **Colin has advised us that he will do the surveying after the ground has frozen and foliage from the vegetation has shed.**

2. Discussion of management plan for the Turtle Preserve; currently, maintenance is scheduled for November, which will involve cutting grasses, tending brush and soil in the Preserve area per directions from Josh Megyesy of NH Fish and Game. This is still our schedule plan. Volunteers will be requested in November for help with maintenance. Josh still intends to complete the catch and release study to track the turtle activity in the area; however, the study has not yet been started and no specific start date has been set. The ACC will continue to keep in contact with Josh. **There was no further contact with Josh during the month of August, but the ACC will continue to follow-up.**

3. Status of Game cameras in Preserve- after discussion, it was decided that Tom G. will research types and prices of cameras that would be appropriate for the Preserve area and Pittman Town Forest. Two cameras in the Preserve area can be set low, and on a timer to catch nesting turtles at work. It was decided that we could utilize four cameras in all, two in the Preserve to catch active nesting with a 3rd up a tree viewing main the area (per police recommendation), and one camera for the Pittman Town Forest. One camera has been purchased, with placement in the preserve along with one owned by the Tuthills. A third has been placed up a tree in the Pittman Town Forest. These have all resulted in helpful photos and videos of our town properties. It would be well worth our while to purchase the additional two suggested cameras, as the Tuthill would like to use their own camera on their own property in the near future. A motion was made to purchase two (2) additional cameras similar to the one previously purchased (total cost estimated to be < \$500.00). The motion passed unanimously - placement will be determined upon receipt. **Cameras have been ordered and will be paid for from the ACC trust account.**

4. Status of Conservation Easements for Preserve plot, and new Town Forest plot: A long discussion was held regarding the pros and cons for taking this step. It was moved by Bob Piehler and 2nd by Ernie Lamos that we look into the details involved in putting land into easements. All were in favor. Jenny will gather information from local organizations and individuals for possible grant help as well as interest in holding easements. In order to meet acreage requirements, the new TF plot may require 10 acres total. If so, the idea of purchasing 2 acres from the adjacent lot owned by Chet Walker was suggested. Surveys

of the properties needed, and discussion is needed concerning the specific type of easement(s) are needed to best suit our purposes. See item #1 above. **It is understood that until we get our land surveyed, no solid steps can be taken; however, it was again suggested that conversation be initiated with the Walker family regarding the possibility of acquiring the 2 additional acres needed to meet the minimum requirements for a Town Forest designation**

5. Results from alternate day(s) trial: Roadside litter pickup will continue be held the 1st Saturday of each month. Volunteers will meet at 10 a.m. at the Municipal Building parking lot. Time change from previous announced meeting is due to the fact that the banner we hang in the transfer station says 10.a.m. Bags and buckets are provided.

In June, only one person showed up for the pickup, and it was cancelled. The July pick-up was cancelled due to lack of participation. Our scheduled pick-up date at 10:00, 8/6 is still planned; however, those who would find 8/2 or 8/3 more convenient, can meet at 10:00 at the Municipal Building. Changes in the pick-up schedule will be considered depending on the results of the “multi-day” alternative option. Remember, anyone can help, you don’t have to be a Commission member. **Four people showed up on 8/3 (Wed.) to participate; nobody showed up on the 4th, and the clean-up on the 6th was cancelled due to excessive heat. There was some discussion about altering our planned schedule of the “1st Saturday of each month”; however, nothing was resolved, other than in view of the Monday holiday, the clean-up for 9/3 was cancelled – Saturday, Oct. 3rd will be our next scheduled clean-up day.**

6. Status of Kiosk re-erecting: Tom, Bob and Rosie all volunteered to start by trying to shovel post holes for the kiosk. Jenny and Tom began the test holes; Rosie completed the task and has dug two very deep and workable holes for the kiosk. On June 3, Jenny and three other elderly volunteers went to erect the kiosk. We found it was too heavy for these four people to lift. We will need six or seven strong individuals to lift it up and carry it the distance to the holes. Committee members are asked to help locate people who can do this. A date for this activity needs to be set asap. It was also agreed that payment for this service would be in order. A date and time will be published once the details are worked out. **No one volunteered equipment needed to complete the job and it was decided to talk with the Road Agent about the possibility of using road crew equipment and labor to accomplish the task. It was recognized that this would need to be coordinated with the Road Agent and performed at their convenience at a time when equipment was in the area for other work.**

7. Status of naming of the new town forest lot to honor George Whittaker and ordering a permanent sign with the wording “George Whittaker Town Forest”. Ernie has discussed this with George and he approves. The naming proposal was brought to the select board and approved. Steve Whitman has offered to create a sign, and if lacking the time this month the committee must approve expenditure for a commercially made sign, which is estimated to be around \$80. Steve was unable to complete the signage and a motion was made to purchase two (2) metal signs formatted as illustrated (actual font size to be determined by purchaser) Motion passed unanimously.

**GEORGE WHITTAKER
TOWN FOREST
Alexandria**

Signs have been received and will be placed soon

8. Josh Megyesy contacted Jenny in late May, indicating he would be visiting Alexandria in the coming week, and would be in touch. No further contact has occurred to date. **See #2 above.**

9. Status of new signage: Due to the trespassing seen on the turtle preserve cameras, at the May meeting a motion was made (Merry) seconded (Tom), and approved, to purchase additional signage to deter foot traffic. Signs to read “Stop: no foot traffic permitted in area”. The committee forgot to decide how many signs? Alexandria Road crew suggest 4. Additionally, we have been asked by members of the public to please put up “Caution Turtle Crossing” signs along Bog Road, and at the bridge on Town Pound Road. Jenny has received 7 emails addressing turtle crossing concerns. At the July meeting an

amendment was added to the motion by Jenny, 2nd by Steve specifying the number of signs at four (4) and adding three (3) new “Caution turtle crossing” signs. Size and exact format is at the discerssion of the purchaser. Motion was again discussed and passes unanimously. **Signs have been received and will be placed soon.**

New Business

1. All other new business brought forth not included in formal agenda:
 - ❖ Jenny showed pictures from the game camara in the Bog. It was suggested that we try to put together a video loop which could be played at the pig roast, the primary, and perhaps the elections in both November 2022 and March 2023. The idea is to highlight the wildlife activity supported in the Bog and generate more public interest.
 - ❖ The question concerning the annual calendar was brought up, but it was not acted on and will be discussed at the September Mtg.

Meeting adjourned at 19:32. Our next meeting will be 28 September 2022, mark your calendars now.