

**Approved Minutes of the
Hartford Conservation Commission
September 29, 2016**

Members Present: Dana Hazen, Mary Hutchins, Tom Kahl, Shawn Kelley and chair Jon Bouton.

Staff Present: Planner Matt Osborn.

Others Present: None.

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held at the Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction on Monday, September 29, 2016 in Room 312. Chair Jon Bouton called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. Jon noted that Shawn Kelley e-mailed that he will be late.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes to the Draft Minutes of September 12th. Being none, Jon stated that the minutes are approved by unanimous consent as written.
2. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** Jon Bouton asked if there are any changes or additions to the agenda. There were none. Matt Osborn stated that he had two events that he would like to announce.
3. **Land Management Subcommittee:** On behalf of new member Tom Kahl, Jon Bouton provided background information on the LMS. He noted that we need to prepare for resuming LMS meetings. He suggested putting together a summary with a map of the areas discussed during previous meetings and site visits. He noted that Parks and Recreation Department Director Tad Nunez had volunteered to help facilitate the meetings. Jon noted that Tom Kahl will be replacing former HCC member Karen Douville on the LMS. Jon noted the delicate balance that is needed to guide management of the Town Forest including forest management, natural resource constraints, wildlife habitat and recreation.
4. **HCC Annual Report:** Matt Osborn reported that he prepared a draft of the Annual Report. He noted that the deadline to submit is November 1st. Matt stated that Mary designed the HCC annual report graphics last year to stand out better. Mary noted that she used InDesign. Jon volunteered to review the draft and update it in MS Word.
5. **HCC Budget:** Matt Osborn reported that he presented the HCC budget to Department Director Lori Hirshfield. She is submitting it along with the Departmental budget to the Town Manager tomorrow. Matt agreed to keep the HCC apprised of the budget process.
6. **Town Forest Boulders/Water Bar Work:** Matt Osborn reported that he spoke with Highway Superintendent Allyn Ricker about the need for boulders at the junction of Reservoir Road and the South Side Trail. The DPW will get to it if they have time.
7. **Town Forest Eagle Scout Project:** Matt Osborn reported that Jon Bouton, Tom Kahl and he assisted Boy Scout Connor Chandler in the removal of a tree that fell on the Simonds Way Bridge recently. Connor will be working on the bridge repair and installation of a box culvert on Saturday. He will work on the kiosk repair later in October. Connor submitted a materials list from Fogg's Hardware for \$519.41 which will come out of the conservation fund. There was discussion about providing a plaque at the kiosk recognizing Connor's work. Matt responded that he believes that is part of the project and will inquire. Matt also noted that we may hear from Boy Scout Adam Potter about installing a kiosk at the south end of the Town Forest. If that project proceeds, Matt recommends placing the kiosk at the intersection of Reservoir Road and the South Side Trail. The HCC agreed.

8. **Natural Resources Review:** Jon Bouton noted that Tom Kahl, Matt Osborn and he will be setting up a meeting with Karen Douville to go over the excel spreadsheet for the natural resource review to get a better understanding of the data and how to use it.
9. **Lower Hurricane Reservoir:** Matt Osborn reported that he left a message with Todd Menees of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Rivers Program last week about scheduling a site visit. Mary Hutchins responded that she heard that Todd may have left that position recently. She will inquire.
10. **Invasive Plants:** Jon Bouton reported that he visited the site of invasive plant work at the former Beacon meadow in the Town Forest. He was very pleased at the results and thinks the Commission should consider hiring a work crew in the future since it is far more effective than small-scale volunteer efforts in controlling invasive plants.
11. **Save Dewey's Pond Committee:** Matt Osborn reported that he will contact Janice Berger about requesting regular updates on the work of the Committee.
12. **Community Resilience Organization Hartford (CROH):** Jon Bouton reported that the CROH Committee decided to make the Resilience Week an annual event.
13. **HCC Brochures:** Mary Hutchins reported that she will be soliciting quotes for the brochure. Tom Kahl suggested posting the brochure on the HCC web page. The Commission agreed. Matt will follow-up.
14. **Town-wide Trails:** Mary Hutchins reported that the project is currently focusing on the Town Forest to Quechee segment.
15. **Announcements/Reports:**
 - a. Recruiting New HCC Members: Shawn Kelley volunteered to post a notice on the Hartford List Serv and Town Facebook page. Jon Bouton thanked Shawn for doing this.
 - b. Town Forest Downed Trees: Matt Osborn brought up the issue of downed trees in the Town Forest. Mary Hutchins responded that the Hurricane Riders will take care of the leaning trees on Reservoir Road and along the VAST trail in the Town Forest.
 - c. Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) Annual Conference: Jon Bouton reported that annual AVCC Conference will be held in Fairlee on October 22nd. He noted that there is a really good program and the keynote speaker is excellent. He added that there are different tracks to choose from. Dana Hazen and Jon will be attending. Mary Hutchins will see if she can get off work that day.
 - d. Bears In Your Woods Workshop: Matt Osborn reported that a workshop on bears sponsored by Vermont Coverts is scheduled for Saturday, October 8th. Jon Bouton noted that it should be good.
 - e. Lake Champlain Basin Program: Matt Osborn reported that the Lake Champlain Basin is sponsoring a two-day workshop on water quality in March. They are looking for teams of 2-3 people to participate. Tom Kahl expressed an interest. Matt will provide Tom with the dates.
16. **Next Meeting:** Jon Bouton reported that the next regularly scheduled HCC meeting will be held on Monday, November 7th.
17. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.