

ORANGE CONN
TOWN PLANS SURVEY
RECORDING DEPARTMENT

2022 JUN -6 PM 6:14

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Orange Conservation Commission

May 4, 2022 7:00 p.m. Room 5
High Plains Community Center

Approved Minutes

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Cindy Ruggeri, Cathy Anderson, Donna Wesolowski, Scott Somerville, Robert McCorkle, and Santo Galatioto

Commissioners Absent: Chair Sharon Ewen

Staff Present: Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Guests: Members of the Girl Scout Troop 60274

I. Call to Order

- Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and reviewed emergency exits.

Ms. Anderson made a motion to add "Discussion of Girl Scout Project" as item #II on the Agenda. Mr. McCorkle seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

II. Girl Scout Project Discussion

- The girl scout troop will meet with Ms. Ruggeri and Ms. Anderson at Turkey Hill Preserve on May twenty-first, at 9:00 a.m., to review trail maintenance and the volunteer expectations of the Commission. It was decided to allow the girls in the troop to plant annuals of marigolds and other orange color varieties at the entrances to Turkey Hill Preserve and Racebrook Tract. Additional locations will be considered by the troop. The troop has purchased hand shovels, gloves, and watering cans. The Commission will purchase the flowers and top soil for each location. Perennials will be considered later in the season at the kiosk locations.
- The girl scout troop will be making pamphlets about safety while walking the trails as well as proper trail maintenance. These pamphlets will be distributed throughout the town. The girls are also considering the production of an instructional video regarding the

trails. Ms. Anderson advised the girls to take pictures of their work that can be posted on the OCC website and Facebook page.

II. Approval of Minutes – April 6, 2022

Ms. Ruggeri made a motion to approve the April 6, 2022 minutes, seconded by Donna Wesolowski. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

IV. Financial Report

- The current balance is \$2,873,.93. This remaining balance will be used for the purchase of signage, flowers, and top soil.

V. Old Business

A. New Trail at THP – Bridge on Yellow Trail

- Ms. Anderson indicated that building a bridge on the yellow trail might be a suitable project for Jack Belfonti for his Eagle Scout project. It was agreed to table this discussion until the next Commission meeting so that Chairman Ewen could be present.

B. Kiosk Updates

- The kiosk contents, which includes maps, service hours and more, has been laminated and Mr. Somerville will install them into the kiosk at both THP and at Paul Ode. Mr. Somerville will try to remove a protruding bolt at the THP kiosk, or cover it with some other posting.

C. Spring Bird Walk with Anthony Zemba – April 23

- Mr. Somerville reported that there were about twenty people in attendance. Mr. McCorkle will do a write up for Facebook and Ms. Anderson will update OCC website.

D. Spring Bird Walk with Anthony Zemba – April 9

- This event was sponsored by the Rotary Club. Ms. Ewen will be asked to inquire as to what the Rotary Club paid for Mr. Zemba's services. In the past, the OCC paid him \$75. A check for his services for the April twenty-third bird walk will be mailed out to his home address.

E. 200 Year Orange Celebration – Wepawaug Walk

- The Commission did not feel that this trail walk should be a part of the Bicentennial celebration as there is another trail walk scheduled for this celebratory event.

Ms. Ruggeri made a motion to eliminate this Wepawaug Walk for the Bicentennial, seconded by Ms. Anderson. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

F. Purchase of Signs

- The Commission agreed to purchase two signs for the yellow trail at THP and two “No Skating” signs for THP and Ewen. Duck signs will not be purchased. Four ATV signs will be purchased as well as No Biking signs for RBT, in spite of the fact that bikers often remove the signage. They will be posted for liability purposes. Ms. Wesolowski noted that dogs off leash is another concern at Racebrook Tract. Other signs will be purchased as needed.

G. Children’s Programs

- Ms. Anderson requested to table this discussion so that Ms. Ewen can be present.

H. Racebrook Steps

- The Town has approved \$12k funding for the installation of steps at Racebrook. The Commission must now decide what type of steps would be appropriate. Overall consensus among members was tie rod steps with crushed stone as the most appropriate solution. They felt that stone steps would be too slippery and less aesthetically pleasing on the trails.

I. Purple Martin Houses

- The purple martin houses have been cleaned but the Commission agreed that counting the birds was not within their scope of work, particularly in light of the fact that the town would not consider a Bird Sanctuary in this location or other open space areas.

J. Vandalism of Boulders - THP

- Mr. Somerville reported that the entrance from Douglas Road is open to vehicles but there is no apparent removal of boulders. This area will continue to be monitored.

K. Land Trust Invite – June Meeting

- Ms. Anderson reported that George Laskos would like to have a joint meeting between the Land Trust and the OCC. Mr. Galatioto advised that the first half hour could be a joint meeting and then the balance of the June meeting should be the regular OCC meeting.

J. CT Trail Days - June

- Ms. Anderson reported that they will not be hosting the CT trail day in June based on the overall consensus of the Commission members.

VI. New Business

A. Memorial Bench

- The Commission members agreed that benches, strategically located within the Open Space areas, is a good idea. They are at no cost to the town and Mr. Galatioto felt that they would be appreciated to some hikers who need a moment to rest. This will be discussed and hopefully approved at the next OCC meeting in June.

B. Joint Meeting with Parks and Recreation and Highway Department

- The Commission members are appreciative to the Highway Department and the Parks and Recreation Department for their support with the upkeep of the trails. A joint meeting will be discussed in the future to discuss general maintenance of the properties.

C. Turkey Hill Preserve

- A picnic table was installed at THP but it is uncertain if it has been chained down.

VI. Standing Committees

- Ms. Anderson mentioned that a Ron Janis, an Orange resident, came to the meeting expressing an interest in volunteering to clean some of the trails. All volunteerism is greatly appreciated, but power tools are not allowed by residents for liability issues. This information was conveyed to Mr. Janis.
- The Recording Secretary will update the Maintenance Log as requested by Commission members. Ms. Anderson requested that the stewards of their assigned properties notify the Commission if the trails need reblazing.
- Ms. Anderson notified Ms. Denny about correcting the Town website to reflect the correct OCC membership list. Mr. Galatioto will be sworn in for another term, but Ms. Wesolowski would like to step down. She agreed to continue until a replacement has been found.

VII. Adjournment

Mr. McCorkle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m., seconded by Mr. Somerville. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Satonick,
Recording Secretary