



Orange Conservation Commission

July 5, 2023 7:00 p.m.

High Plains Community Center

(Unapproved)

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Chair Cathy Anderson, Donna Wesolowski, Sharon Kahara, Scott Somerville, Chantelle Bunnell, Santo Galatioto, and Sharon Ewen

Staff Present: Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., seconded by Ms. Bunnell. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

Chairman Anderson reviewed the emergency exits and noted that there was no public dialogue.

1. Review and Approval of May 3, 2023 OCC Minutes

Ms. Ewen moved to approve the May 3, 2023 Orange Conservation Commission minutes, seconded by Mr. Galatioto. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

2. Financial Report

Chairman Anderson noted that as the new fiscal year began on July 1, money in the previous budget has been encumbered for the signage. Fifty percent must be paid up front for the signs with the remaining balance to be paid upon completion.

OLD BUSINESS

After a brief discussion, it was agreed to have a Fall Workday on October 7th, possibly at Wepawaug. Mr. Somerville will walk the area for a possible location site.

Lighting and cameras have been purchased for Racebrook Tract and the police have been contacted for advice as to the best locations for the motion detector lights. Mr. Foyer will handle the installation.

After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that clarification is required as to whether Fred Wolfe

Park continues to be passive open space under the guidance of OCC.

Mr. Somerville made a motion that a letter be written to ask Mr. Zeoli for clarification about this property. Mr. Galatioto seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Vote for Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary

Ms. Bunnell made a motion to nominate and approve Ms. Anderson as Chairman of the OCC. Mr. Galatioto seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

Ms. Kahara made a motion to nominate and approve Ms. Ewen as the Vice Chairman of the OCC. Ms. Bunnell seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

Ms. Wesolowski made a motion to nominate and approve Ms. Bunnell as Secretary of the OCC. Ms. Ewen seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion PASSED.

2. Closing of Howard Brooks Walkway at Racebrook Tract

The Public Works Department will put up a permanent barrier to close the Howard Brooks Walkway due to unsafe conditions.

3. DEEP Grant in 2024 for Howard Brooks Walkway Replacement

The Commission will use the services of two grant writers to reapply for the DEEP grant in 2024 to repair the Howard Brooks Walkway. It was suggested that a newspaper article be written about the closing of the walkway.

4. Paul Ode Trail: New Disco Golf Nets Installed & Equipment Concerns

Chairman Anderson advised that she would notify Mr. Lynch that new disc golf nets are being installed at Paul Ode Trail. Going forward, the OCC should be notified about the installation of new equipment.

REVIEW OF TRAILS & STEWARD REPORTS

1. Wepawaug Conservation Area – Sharon Ewen/Scott Somerville

There was a brief discussion on signage, noting that the sign verbiage should include proper recognition of Howard Brooks. They will seek funding from the Orange Land Trust toward the sign.

2. Housatonic Overlook – Donna Wesolowski

Signage was discussed, along with the yellow paint and markers for the trails.

3. Paul Ode Nature – Donna Wesolowski

This property site was previously discussed in the meeting.

4. Racebrook Tract – Cathy Anderson/Sharon Kahara

Three Townline markers were installed on the property line and the monies from the Orange Foundation Grant will be used toward the parking lot fence. Mr. Ewen replaced the Plexiglass on the back side with a hinge. Lastly, the Commission discussed Trailsfork.com and other applications for mountain bikers.

5. Ewen Preserve – Sharon Ewen/Chantelle Bunnell

Mr. Ross can do the GPA mapping of the new trail. Ms. Bunnell will arrange a meeting with Mr. Ross to discuss the maps and the QR codes.

6. Turkey Hill Preserve – Mike Ross/Scott Somerville

On July 3rd a fallen tree was reported to Mr. foyer.

CALENDER of EVENTS

Orange Country Fair

The annual fair will be held from 9/16-9/17. The OCC has paid for a double booth with four tables. In the absence of Mr. McCorkle, many volunteers will be needed to make this event successful. A sign-up sheet will be circulated for volunteers. The Audubon Society and the Girl Scouts will also be present at the booth. Information on Beech Blight adversely affecting the beech tress will be distributed at the fair. Ms. Wesolowski will provide a picture board with photos of people using the trails.

Programs

CAPS monitoring for beetles and moths have placed traps at Racebrook Tract, Fred Wolfe Park, and Housatonic Overlook. There are no new programs to be discussed at this time.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was a brief discussion about some issues at 615 St. John's Place and the matter has been forwarded to Mr. Demirjian, the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

The relocation of the bridge at Ewen Preserve is on hold as the town is waiting for Orange Fence Company.

*Ms. Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m., seconded by Ms. Chantell.
All were in favor and the motion PASSED.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Satonick
Recording Secretary