

BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Monday, April 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting utilizing Zoom

Members Present: Chairman Rod Parlee, Alan Bicknell and Jean Laughman (left the meeting from 7:12 to 7:19), Brenda Cataldo (joined the meeting at 7:42) and Peter Van Dine

1.0 Call Meeting to Order – Roll Call

Chairman R. Parlee called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2.0 Minutes Review of March 6, 2023, Regular Meeting

J. Laughman made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0:0.

3.0 Public Comment: None

4.0 Financial Report

R. Parlee shared the Treasurer's report online.

A. Bicknell made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as submitted. R. Parlee seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0:0.

4.1 Place order for NCCD Seedling Sale

<https://conservect.org/northcentral/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Brochure-web.pdf>

R. Parlee noted that several of the proposed prizes were unavailable. Substitutions were made. The total cost of the photo contest prizes is estimated at \$476.00, including two bags of Collins compost and a bare-root bundle of White Spruce may be donated.

P. Van Dine made a motion to appropriate up to \$500.00 to purchase photo contest prizes from the NCCD. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed 3:0:0. J. Laughman was absent for the vote.

P. Van Dine made a motion to amend the previous motion to indicate that the funds would come from the Conservation Activity Fund. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed 3:0:0.

4.2 Additional Stream Temperature Monitors/TIDBITS

P. Van Dine noted that there are plenty of hoboos, many of which aren't currently in the water but are used to swap out. Some are owned by the BCC and some are owned by the State. Bluetooth download is the new technology and the tidbit has to be taken out of the water to extract the data.

There is a new device that monitors both temperature and oxygen although they cost over \$1,000.00. They have been recommended for use in the lakes. Perhaps this could be a joint effort between the BCC and the FBL. The devices would need to be checked at least every other week to make sure nothing happened to them.

J. Laughman asked if we would be monitoring the vernal pool on the Nathan Hale Greenway. R. Parlee noted that vernal pool tends to dry up in the summer. P. Van Dine feels that the BCC should continue to monitor the temperature in the vernal pool in Bolton Notch State Park. P. Van Dine asked if the data from both vernal pools could be collected on the same day. It would probably take an afternoon to collect data from both. Care would have to be taken to keep the data in the correct file.

P. Van Dine found that the cost of a new tidbit would be \$149.00. P. Van Dine made a motion to purchase a tidbit from Onset at a cost not to exceed \$175.00 from the Conservation Activity Fund. J. Laughman seconded. Motion passed unanimously 4:0:0.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Proposed Salamander Survey & Bolton Spring Site

R. Parlee sent a thank you note to Hank Gruner for his participation in Vernal Pools Day. Mr. Gruner plans to do a salamander survey in Bolton in May and September. The BCC members said that the survey sounds fascinating. R. Parlee will discuss with Hank Gruner if this will be a professional service or volunteer service. If it is a professional service and the BCC receives a copy of the surveys, the BCC may provide compensation to Mr. Gruner.

A. Bicknell asked if we have received copies of any surveys that were done in the past. The BCC should have something to show for it if he receives compensation. R. Parlee noted that he has hard copies of previous surveys. P. Van Dine offered to scan them and distribute them to the commission members. P. Van Dine would particularly like to see the old vernal pool survey for Bolton.

The Bolton Spring Site Abstract was sent to R. Parlee. It shows the rock outcropping that shadows the vernal pool and the exact location should be noted on a map. It presents an enigma to geologists. The stream that the salamander survey will be done in is not far from this.

The open space/vernal pool map of Bolton could be amended to include the salamander survey map and the Bolton Spring site.

5.2 Latest Open Space Parcel Map and 490 Layer

P. Van Dine is awaiting electronic information. He has been requesting this for several months. He noted that there is a large amount of work involved with compiling this data. He needs the underlying metadata. R. Parlee and P. Van Dine will discuss the logistics offline.

5.3 CLCC Conference Report

R. Parlee attended the annual meeting at Wesleyan. 400+ members were in attendance. There were 57 workshops and 4 breakout sessions. He was impressed with the networking opportunities and the conference in general.

5.4 Vernal Pools Day Results, Earth Day (4/22), Kids to Parks Day (5/20) & Trails Day (6/3)

Vernal Pools Day Results- R. Parlee shared a collage of pictures from the event. The event was attended by 30 people. Egg masses and salamanders were observed. Hank Gruner donated a copy of his recent book about amphibians to R. Parlee and to the Bentley Memorial Library.

Earth Day-R. Parlee was concerned about the conditions at Freja Park as he was contacted about ATV's going fast on the trails in Freja Park. They had been on the Shenipsit Trail, crossing a footbridge and into Notch Pond. Fortunately, there was not that much damage. R. Parlee contacted Pam Sawyer. She recommended providing her details such as photo evidence, time observed, exact location, and color of ATVs, dirt bikes and helmets. That would be very helpful for the resident trooper. The location should be okay for Earth Day. The event will start at 10:00 a.m. with the fairy house building contest and a slow hike to the pond. B. Cataldo will put together artwork for a flyer. B. Cataldo has four to five prizes on hand. Earth Day T-shirts and Bolton tote bags are also available.

Kids to Parks Day-R. Parlee has not heard from the Rec. Dept. They are the lead on this event.

Trails Day- The commission agreed to details by consensus. A description of the hike has to be submitted to the CT Forest and Parks Association by April 14th. Matt Largess will join the hike that will begin at the Munson's upper parking lot. It will be the same hike as in 2022.

5.5 MS-4 Deadline/Comments

P. Van Dine noted that the Bolton MS-4 Report for the past several years is an overview document that gives little information about specific catch basin locations or problems. The most detailed part of the report appears to be studies done by other towns or organizations along the upper Blackledge River in Bolton as part of Salmon River Watershed studies. Last year he had an email conversation with the engineer the Town hired to prepare the MS-4. The advice from this conversation was that if we observed a storm water problem we should document and report it at the time of observation. Furthermore, both the Draft Bolton Lakes Management Plan (currently under review by the CT DEEP) and a study undertaken in part by a Bolton High School science class recommended storm water improvements around Lower Bolton Lake. Such a project would probably require a grant such as the 319 Program.

5.6 Photo Contest Promo

R. Parlee noted that the 2023 contest ends on May 8th. The prizes will be picked up from the NCCD sale on April 21, 2023 and will be delivered to contest winners in late May.

B. Cataldo will send an Email including the photo contest flyer to prior contest participants. R. Parlee will contact the Journal Inquirer and the Hartford Courant to publicize the contest. The flyer is on the Town of Bolton webpage. Flyers will also be handed out on Earth Day.

6.0 Continuing Business

6.1 CT DEEP Response to Tunnel Lighting and Graffiti in the Notch

R. Parlee sent a letter to Dave Buckley of the CT DEEP regarding tunnel lighting and graffiti in the Notch. He read portions of the letter and a copy of the letter was included in the correspondence.

The following statute covers the penalty for graffiti:

Sec. 53a-117. Criminal mischief in the third degree: Class B misdemeanor. (a) A person is guilty of criminal mischief in the third degree when, having no reasonable ground to believe that he has a right to do so, he: (1) Intentionally or recklessly (A) damages tangible property of another, or (B) tampers with tangible property of another and thereby causes such property to be placed in danger of damage; or (2) damages tangible property of another by negligence involving the use of any potentially harmful or destructive force or substance, such as, but not limited to, fire, explosives, flood, avalanche, collapse of building, poison gas or radioactive material.

(b) Criminal mischief in the third degree is a class B misdemeanor.

6.2 Nathan Hale Greenway Parking Letter to BoS and Munson's Request

At the request of the Chair, the BCC letter submitted under Public Comment was finally included in its entirety under the February 7, 2023, BOS meeting on the Town webpage. R. Parlee and P. Van Dine recently took pictures of the Nathan Hale Greenway using a drone and Munson's requested one from a different angle.

6.3 SRWP Report & ExStik II pH/Conductivity Meter

R. Parlee sent out the 2022 SRWP annual report to the BCC members. P. Van Dine will be contacting Pat Young. The SRWP does conductivity weekly using high school students. J. Laughman agreed to find contact information for the BHS science teacher. P. Van Dine will contact Mr. Scorso to ask if he would be willing to take weekly water samples that a member of the BCC would then pick up for testing. R. Parlee asked about testing conductivity in the spring site. P. Van Dine is not sure where that is. R. Parlee will follow up with Hank Gruner.

6.4 Freja Park Workparty

R. Parlee joined a work party sponsored by the Hop River Alliance to remove the bittersweet that was in the trees bordering Notch Pond.

R. Parlee would like to do a litter collection before Earth Day, on Saturday, April 15, 2023. A. Bicknell volunteered to help.

R. Parlee shared a picture of salamander egg masses in the vernal pool.

6.4 FBL, BLWCA and CACIWC Reports

FBL-P. Van Dine noted that the FBL has got a good start under the new president. Proactive work will be done on a 319 grant. They are tired of arguing with CT DEEP on the drawdown which should be handled by the BLWCA.

BLWCA-R. Parlee met with folks at the CLCC conference. Cameron Covill is the new Bolton wetlands agent, and he joined R. Parlee at a meeting on Hatch Hill Dam with CTDEEP staff. A discussion was held on how to do the perfect drawdown. The CT DEEP agreed that the rare Atlantic White Cedar is worthy of protection, offered many options and is planning an assessment on the current health in May by kayak with the Alliance.

CACIWC-The meeting was held in person last Wednesday. Plans are being made for the annual meeting to be held in November in Bristol.

7.0 Correspondence

Proposed Seedling Sale Purchase and Photo Contest Prizes
Response from letter to Dave Buckley of CT DEEP
From Trooper Brian Contenda “The statute is criminal mischief. 53a-117”
Bolton Spring Site behind Munson’s info (map and abstract)
Vernal Pools Day Collage
SRWP Report

8.0 Approval of Clerk’s Invoice

A. Bicknell made a motion to accept the clerk’s invoice as presented. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

9.0 Adjournment

J. Laughman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 1, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Leslie Brand,

Leslie J. Brand

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for corrections to these minutes and any corrections hereto.

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Financial Action items

P. Van Dine made a motion to appropriate up to \$500.00 to purchase photo contest prizes from the NCCD. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed 3:0:0. J. Laughman was absent for the vote.

P. Van Dine made a motion to amend the previous motion to indicate that the funds would come from the Conservation Activity Fund. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed 3:0:0.

P. Van Dine found that the cost of a new tidbit would be \$149.00. P. Van Dine made a motion to purchase a tidbit from Onset at a cost not to exceed \$175.00 from the Conservation Activity Fund. J. Laughman seconded. Motion passed unanimously 4:0:0.