

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

(203) 431-2713 • conservation@ridgefieldct.org



Meeting January 22, 2024 at 7PM

Present: Roberta Barbieri James Coyle Eric Keller Jim Liptack
Anthony Markert Pete Nichols Allan Welby

Absent: Jack Kace, Jean Linville, Jana Hogan and Matt Sharp.

Present: CEO Caleb Johnson.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of January 08, 2024 be approved and ordered filed in Town Hall. Vote: 7:0

2. MAR JOY POND BEAVERS

CEO Caleb Johnson followed up regarding a beaver complaint and possible spillways backing up along Mar Joy Pond. The CEO visited the property with Mr. Buccitti and determined the spillways were not clogging up due to debris; however, the Highway Department will clear. The CEO will advise the home owners that the RCC will not remove the beavers. Furthermore, they are to remove the fence on open space and the CEO will advise them how to add protections around their trees.

The RCC discussed whether there is a Town spillway cleanup schedule and or management.

3. LEVY PARK PRESERVE, POTENTIAL ENCROACHMENT

Mr. Sharp and Mr. Liptack were hiking trails for the Walk Book at Levy Park Preserve and noticed a number of items on the open space. The CEO will issue a NOPV to the property owner pertaining to deer stands/deer feeder, large equipment, bocce ball court, retaining wall, and paved driveway on open space.

The CEO also discussed creating a similar online violation reporting system that the Inland Wetlands Board currently uses. He will meet with IT and report back.

4. 54 KETCHAM ROAD SUBDIVISION

Following the P&Z meeting on January 16th, Mr. Keller and Mr. Coyle expressed concerns of the parcel proposed for donation citing isolation and fragmentation from surrounding conservation areas are problematic. Access to the open space by road is important. The legal counsel for the development indicated that the owner most likely will create their own private open space. Mr. Keller will draft another letter regarding egress and access to the open space parcel.

5. WEBSITE

Ms. Hogan and her son are working on the new RCC website. Mr. Coyle, Ms. Hogan, and IT met to review the new site and get approval. The website is 90% complete and looks amazing.

Mr. Coyle also has asked the Town Treasurer to look into the fees RCC is paying for online donations and other options.

6. WALK BOOK UPDATE

Mr. Coyle along with the subcommittee Mr. Nichols, Mr. Liptack and Mr. Sharp are meeting every other Friday to work through new graphics and possible additions to the book. The RCC will begin a photo contest for the front and back of the Walk Book. More details to come.

7. THRIFT SHOP GRANT

Mr. Coyle is working on the paperwork for the grant due at the end of the month. Mr. Welby will put together a spreadsheet with costs for items for his proposed project.

Ms. Barbieri will apply for the grant on behalf of RACE to use goats for invasive removal at Aldrich Park. She will reach out to Parks and Rec to confirm they are on board and Aldrich Park is not open space.

8. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Coyle reviewed the subcommittee assignments with the RCC members laying out heads of committees and members' responsibilities. The steep slope ordinance is top priority for the Regulatory Committee. Mr. Markert brought up a possible inventory of spillways and dams to help with the Flood and Erosion Control Committee.

9. VESTS AND BUSINESS CARDS

RCC decided business cards would not be useful and to have laminated signs for vehicles printed in the office.

UPON motion duly made (Markert), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to spend up to \$250 on orange class 2 identification vests for RCC members. Vote: 7:0

10. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

P&Z

February 6 – Keller
February 27 - Linville

IWB

January 25 – Kace
February 8 – Liptack

Mr. Coyle will stand in for Mr. Keller's February 6th assignment.

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to add New Business to the agenda. Vote: 7:0

11. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Barbieri, Mr. Nichols, Ms. Hogan and volunteers from the public are working on a Town wide invasives committee, securing resources and creating a management plan. They are meeting every other week until complete.

Ms. Barbieri brought up naming a large rock in the Florida Refuge with one of Mr. Nichols burnt wood signs. They will work on a name and report back.

Mr. Nichols refinished a bench and will place it at McKeon Farm.

Mr. Keller and Mr. Sharp have already secured three out of four summer workers for this year.

12. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Annual meeting planning is to begin. RCC members will think about guest speaker and try to narrow down a date with ACT Theater.

Mr. Keller secured a \$500 donation from the Aquarian Water Company.

Eversource has begun tree cutting once more on the rail trail. Mr. Kace will draft another letter.

Mr. Coyle mentioned the capital budget request has been reviewed by the First Selectperson. The First Selectperson has cut the \$25,000 request for forestry. RCC will consider next steps.

ADJOURNMENT UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting adjourn at 8:56 P.M. Vote: 7:0.