

**CHESHIRE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013
TOWN HALL ROOM 115 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Members present: Bill Sherman, Robert DeVylder, Matt Abdifar, Carrie Collins, and Jodee Heritage.

Member Absent: David Mercugliano and Daniel Grasso.

Staff Present: Bill Voelker was present in Suzanne Simone's absence.

Other: Town council member Sylvia Nichols

I. Call to Order

Chairman Sherman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Ms. Heritage called the roll.

Members in attendance were Bill Sherman, Robert DeVylder, Matt Abdifar, Carrie Collins, and Jodee Heritage.

**III. Determination of Quorum
Commissioner Attendance Summary**

There were enough members present for a quorum.

Members not present were David Mercugliano and Daniel Grasso.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge of allegiance.

V. Acceptance of Minutes – Regular Meeting – September 11, 2013

Chairman Sherman called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2013 regular meeting.

Motion: To accept the minutes from the September 11, 2013 regular meeting as read (with corrections).

Moved by Ms. Heritage. Seconded Ms. Collins. Chairman stated he had a few corrections to the minutes.

Corrections: pg. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 “Abdihar” to “Abdifar”; pg. 5 3rd ph should read “about where in the trail”; pg. 7 “necessarily” to “necessary”; pg. 9 5th ph should read “properties maps.”

All Commission members were in favor of the motion. Chairman Sherman stated the motion carries.

Corrections to the August 14, 2013 regular meeting: pg. 3 3rd ph delete “be”; 11th ph “being” to “beginning”; pg. 4 4th ph add “weeks” before “staff”; pg. 7 4th ph add after “add” “summarize”; pg 8 10th ph “owes” to “own”; pg 9 5th ph “when” to “went”; pg 13 10th ph “osmoses” to “auspices”.

VI. Communications

1. CACIWC 36th Annual Meeting and Conference - 11/16/13

Chairman Sherman said the communication for this month was the announcement of the annual meeting and environmental conference of the Connecticut Association of Conservation Inland Wetlands Commissions.

Chairman Sherman said the meeting and conference will be held in about a month from now, Saturday, November 16, 2013.

Mr. Voelker explained that they have been handling registrations through the office and advised members to call Catherine or Jocelyn to get signed up; there’s a budget to send Commissioners to events.

Mr. Voelker said if you wish to go please let the office know soon because it’s a little cheaper if we register by October 31 for members. He said the fee is either \$40 or \$50 but either way it’s cheaper the earlier they sign up.

Mr. Abdifar asked what’s happened in the past.

Mr. Voelker said he didn’t know about this Commission - he said they do have Planning and Zoning members that go to training sessions and things like that. He said it’s worthwhile to interact with your peers – you get to listen to other people – you hear good ideas that other communities are doing – it’s a networking event as much as anything else and he always recommends Commissioners go – you get a different point of view and the value is what you make of it from there; but clearly there’s benefits to attend these kinds of events.

VII. Calendar – Events

Cheshire Academy Volunteer Day: Saturday, October 19, 2013 (no rain date)

Chairman Sherman said the next item on our agenda is the calendar of events and it's sort of a moot point in that the Cheshire Academy Volunteer Day that was scheduled for a few days ago has past. He said he was just curious if anything came of Ms. Heritage's discussions with them.

Ms. Heritage said what happened was there were Academy students available but Suzanne was really overwhelmed with the National Public Lands Day so they opted to postpone – we'll look at scheduling with the Academy students at another time – perhaps in the spring.

VIII. Unfinished Business

1. National Public Lands Day; Cheshire event recap

Chairman Sherman said the National Public Lands Day was held at the DeDominicis property and it seemed that they had about 15-20 volunteers. He said he could only stay and participate at the beginning – so he was curious what other members had to say.

Mr. Abdifar said they had about fifteen high school kids which was great and there were some adult volunteers to help supervise and they just went together to the trail. He explained Suzanne picked out two different activities that they were doing and they split into teams. He said they were there for about three hours and got a lot done.

Mr. Abdifar stated that Jim Jaskot came to the event.

Mr. Voelker said Jim Jaskot is the town's finance director.

Mr. Abdifar said having Mr. Jaskot there was fun. He said there was a good turnout – it was very successful.

It was noted that the target species removal was Barberry. Mr. Abdifar stated they also did some trenching.

Chairman Sherman said there was also some debris cleared out and some culvert clean out as well.

Chairman Sherman said he commended Mr. Abdifar for reaching out to the high school to find those folks. He said they should remember

to do that again for future events like that. He said they can also reach out to Cheshire Academy folks too.

2. Social Media

Chairman Sherman said he didn't know of anything new there.

Ms. Collins stated there was no update yet. She said she's still working to set a meeting with Arnett Talbot.

Ms. Collins said she did have one item to note – the solar update – she wanted everyone to know that November 14, 2013 is the kick-off at the Town Hall Council Chambers for the solar program.

Ms. Collins provided a recap of the solar program – she said they are trying to promote solar energy use on roof tops in town. She explained they'll be a kick off meeting – it will probably go through March or April 2014.

Ms. Collins said they are just starting to get the word out to all the Commissions.

Ms. Heritage asked about the solar program details.

Chairman Sherman said for Ms. Heritage's benefit (she was not present at the meeting when the solar program was discussed – presentation given by Tim White) – the information is in the minutes of one of the prior meetings – it might have been the August meeting.

Ms. Collins said basically the town has chosen three preferred providers to put in solar panels.

Mr. Abdifar said he'll try to attend the November 14, 2013 kick-off.

3. Scout Projects

Chairman Sherman said the scout projects were among unfinished business but he did not have anything new to report.

IX. New Business

1. Ten Mile Lowlands Kiosk

Chairman Sherman said he did expect Boy Scout Robert Clark to join us tonight (he was to attend a previously scheduled meeting).

Chairman Sherman said Mr. Clark had met with Suzanne earlier this month to go over the plans for the kiosk at Ten Mile Lowlands and his intention was to come before us to get our approval to use the materials that have been purchased and are currently in storage. He said some of us may remember that those materials were purchase probably about a year or so ago.

Mr. DeVyllder said more like three or four years ago.

Chairman Sherman said so that is what Suzanne wanted us to act upon is for the Commission to give approval for the use of those materials.

Mr. DeVyllder informed the Commission that the kiosk at Boulder Knoll has been damaged and is in need of repair.

Mr. Voelker said he appreciated Mr. DeVyllder informing him of the issue and he'll look into getting it fixed.

Chairman Sherman thanked Mr. DeVyllder for bringing that item forward – it's good to have our eyes open.

Chairman Sherman said Mr. Clark can't proceed until the Commission gives his approval to use the materials and construct the kiosk.

Motion: That the Commission allows Boy Scout Robert Clark to use the materials to construct the kiosk at the Ten Mile Lowlands.

Moved by Mr. DeVyllder. Seconded Ms. Heritage.

Ms. Heritage asked if there was enough material there to build the entire kiosk.

Chairman Sherman said he (Robert Clark) will go over any materials list (for the construction of the kiosk).

Ms. Heritage asked if there was a need to provide additional funding and should that be part of the motion.

Mr. DeVyllder stated all the materials should be there.

Ms. Heritage said she wanted to make sure if he starts he can finish. She said she thought this would be a good time to address this in case additional funds were needed.

Chairman Sherman said he thought typically scouts often do a little fund raising for things – like for Eagle Scout projects.

Mr. Voelker said if they need to come back (for funds) they will but he said he was going to guess most of the material is there. He said he spoke to Suzanne briefly today and she said all they really need is the authorization to proceed with what's there. He said if they need more it's not going too much.

Mr. DeVlyder said it would be good to get the project going now before the ground freezes.

Motion carries by a unanimous vote of Commission members present.

2. Dime Savings Access

Chairman Sherman said this item was discussed previously at a prior meeting.

Chairman Sherman stated he didn't have anything new to report on this. He said if Suzanne was here perhaps she might have but he didn't know anything more about that.

Mr. Voelker said he had nothing to report.

3. Town Naming Policy

Chairman Sherman said the next item has to do with the town naming policy on town properties and that was distributed to members.

Chairman Sherman said members should review it and keep these points in mind. He said he thought there was some interest coming up with perhaps some different names in particular for the Dime Savings Property.

Chairman Sherman said they just need to keep these town naming things in mind and then come with some kind of game plan or maybe have a sub-committee or develop a plan to come up with a name.

Mr. DeVlyder talked about the naming of the Dime Savings Property – maybe call it the Yankee Expressway Highlands; he said the Yankee Expressway is right there – 84 – this is the land overlooking 84 – he said you know something that would have meaning to the town instead of the company that foreclosed on a piece of property; he said there's very little that happened in that part of town when you

go back and study the history but if you go back to the 1950s and the highway going through the wilderness out there for the lack of a better term because there was nothing there; he said the name would have something to do with that part of town; a historical fact even though it only goes back to the 1950s.

Chairman Sherman said he thought some of Mr. DeVlyder's points were brought in the policies. He said he was not sure about the best way to undertaking a little project like this but perhaps Mr. Voelker might have some more history on this sort of thing.

Mr. Voelker talked about how other communities name properties – he said Bob's point is well taken. He said there was an earlier discussion about this – they try to use names from local history perhaps people who may of lived in the area perhaps events that may have occurred in or around the same area so Bob make a good point – Dime Savings – that's how we got it – they foreclosed on it?

Mr. DeVlyder noted that the Dime Savings property was foreclosed on it – the property. He talked about the location of the property and his idea for the proposed name of property.

Mr. Voelker said the idea is to start a discussion on the naming and then convince others on the name.

Chairman Sherman said you can see from the handout there is a little process that goes forward – to the Town Manager – the Town Council and Planning Committee and so on and so forth so it is a process.

Mr. DeVlyder asked how the process gets started.

Chairman Sherman said that detail is listed on the bottom of the second page Roman numeral four; members read how to get the process started.

Ms. Collins commented about having a committee for the naming and then taking it to the town and maybe using social media outlets.

Mr. Abdifar said when you say the town you mean like the general public.

Ms. Collins stated yes.

Mr. DeVlyder said he wanted to see the name changed.

Chairman Sherman agreed and said it was time.

Chairman Sherman said he wanted to keep this item rolling forward on the agenda and he encourage Commission members to reach out to others and see if there are any other ideas too.

4. Roaring Brook Management Plan

Chairman Sherman said the last item of new business is the Roaring Brook Management Plan which was distributed.

Chairman Sherman said the plan has a draft date of October 3, 2013 – he said Suzanne Simone has drafted this with the typical sections; property description, management goals, permitted uses, and prohibited uses with reference to the Town of Cheshire code of ordinances – both the permitted and prohibited uses.

Commission members reviewed the management plan.

Mr. Voelker said this agency’s task is really to review and whatever criticism there are can be recommended now – the next task is to make a recommendation and submit it in writing before it goes to he believed Park and Recreation.

Mr. Voelker said Suzanne asked him to take down any comments and make notes of anything the Commission had to say about the plan.

Chairman Sherman said again the format is much like the managements plans that we’ve seen for other properties.

Mr. Voelker said there are cases where they have the general public asking us in other context about using portions or acquiring portions of the Ten Mile Lowlands and the management plan in this case was very useful; having the management plan in place and reviewed by various agencies and adopted by the Town Council was very, very helpful.

Ms. Heritage asked if the management plan actual address the fact that if someone wanted to purchase a piece of land.

Mr. Voelker stated no. He said what the management plan and the adopting of the management plan demonstrates is a commitment by this community to preserve and protect the open spaces in a very proactive way and it’s very useful to us (staff).

Mr. Voelker said in this case – in this community you’d don’t have that should anyone get to the decision makers at a higher level they might entertain it – but we also have adopted this management plan;

he said these pieces are valuable and these management plans and Suzanne does an excellent job with the management plans – and they really point that out. He said it was the Ten Mile Lowlands that someone was interested in (they wanted access to put driveways through to get to the property – someone acquired the property thinking there development potential which it didn't).

Mr. Voelker said after this Commission's vote on the plan it moves to Parks and Recreation next and it would be good to do that as soon as possible.

Motion: That the Commission adopts the management plan for Roaring Brook property as of October 21, 2103.

Moved by Ms. Heritage. Seconded by Mr. Abdifar.

Chairman Sherman said again if any Commission members have any questions about this for Suzanne before moving on they can vote the motion down and then take it up at the next meeting.

Chairman Sherman said it's interesting this is one of the earliest properties that the Town had acquired; and had previously had a management plan.

Mr. DeVlyder said the property goes back to the early 1960s.

Ms. Heritage said she wanted to say its one of the flagship properties in town; as is any property on Roaring Brook Road.

Motion carries by a unanimous vote of Commission members present.

X. Adjournment

Chairman Sherman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. by the consensus of Commission members present.

Respectfully submitted:

**Carla Mills
Recording Secretary
Cheshire Environment Commission**