

**CHESHIRE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2014  
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL ROOM 115 AT 7:00 P.M.**

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**Members present: Bill Sherman, Matt Abdifar, Bob DeVlyder, Dave Mercugliano and Jodee Heritage.**

**Members not present: Carrie Collins-White and Daniel Grasso.**

**Staff: Suzanne Simone.**

**I. Call to Order**

**Chairman Sherman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**

**II. Roll Call**

**Ms. Heritage called the roll. Members in attendance were Bill Sherman, Matt Abdifar, Bob DeVlyder, Dave Mercugliano and Jodee Heritage.**

**III. Determination of Quorum**

**Commissioner Attendance Summary**

**Chairman Sherman determined there were enough members present for a quorum.**

**Members not present were Carrie Collins-White and Daniel Grasso.**

**IV. Pledge of Allegiance**

**All present recited the pledge of allegiance.**

**V. Acceptance of Minutes – Regular Meeting of June 11, 2014**

**Motion: To approved the minutes of the regular meeting of June 11, 2014 with no corrections.**

**Moved by Mr. DeVlyder. Seconded by Mr. Dave Mercugliano. Motion approved unanimously by Commission members present.**

**VI. Communications**

- 1. CACIWC The Habitat, Summer 2014 Newsletter, volume 26 number 3  
(To be handed out at the meeting)**

**2. Rotary Club Presentation**

Chairman Sherman said he spoke with a woman from the Rotary Club and she had asked if a member of this Commission would be interested in giving a presentation to inform their members about what we do as a Commission.

Chairman Sherman asked Ms. Simone if she could attend a Rotary meeting and give a presentation on behalf of the Environment Commission.

Chairman Sherman said he and Ms. Simone could attend a Rotary meeting if schedules permitted.

**VII. Calendar – Events**

**1. Fall Festival-September 6, 2014**

Chairman Sherman stated the Fall Festival took place.

**2. National Public Lands Day- September 27, 2014**

Chairman Sherman stated National Public Lands Day is coming up. He said they can chat about that under new business.

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

**1. Benches**

Chairman Sherman said at the last meeting Mr. DeVlyder brought up the suggestion about having some benches at the trails.

Ms. Simone said she contacted Bob Ceccolini, the Parks Director since open spaces fall under his department. She said she mentioned to him the idea and he wrote in an email in the past they started off using benches (wooded) and they would get a lot of complaints about people's concerned about vandalism – that the benches were being carved into and the condition of the benches caused splinters so they steered away from using rustic style benches even though they seem to be a good fit they really didn't seem to work in the landscape.

Ms. Simone said they have really narrowed it down to metal benches and that's what they prefer. She said the cost is much greater but the maintenance and complaint issues are apparently much less.

Ms. Simone said she didn't recall the cost of the metal benches. She said Mr. Ceccolini did mention often times people purchasing benches

in honor of someone have accounts are set up so people can donate to that specific account. She agreed to look into that and get an idea of prices.

Mr. Mercugliano asked if they could suggest to a family considering a bench a few sites that would be lovely for a bench. He said maybe they can talk about the idea of where they'd like a bench and see if there's a way of highlighting desired areas for a bench (and costs).

Ms. Simone said she could provide a detailed list of proposed locations for benches to the Parks Department as well as the town manager so they can have that conversation.

## 2. Publicity in Schools

Ms. Heritage informed Commission members she had forty sets of copies of the maps (open space) and different handouts. She explained Suzanne is going to send her the letterhead and she'll put our invitation on that letterhead and she'll follow up with the elementary schools, Dodd, the high school, Cheshire Academy and St. Bridget's.

## 3. Property Updates

Chairman Sherman said that he asked Suzanne to give the Commission updates on any maintenance issues. He said they can address any other issues anyone else has noticed.

Ms. Simone said for the Piechowski property she met with Robert Clark who's an eagle scout who is planning on working on a kiosk on that property. She said they met at the property and scouted a general location of where the kiosk will go.

Ms. Simone explained the kiosk will be designed so that it will be movable – it will be secure so that it will stay up right but it will also be movable once we get to the point where we establish a trail and possibly a parking area so that we may be able to move that kiosk.

Ms. Simone said timeframe for the project is sooner than later so he (Mr. Clark) is planning on getting all of the materials donated for the most part. She explained if there are some materials that he needs we may be able to purchase them for him.

Ms. Simone said he'll (Mr. Clark) call us before he's going to do it because we'll want to contact Call Before You Dig because its right near the road – we want to make sure we aren't going to knock anyone's cable out. She said hopefully that (project) will happen sooner than later.

Ms. Simone reported on the kiosk at the Casertano property. She said Patrick (Hedden) has made an adjustment to it so we can get the Plexiglass on there and that the town will be purchasing that Plexiglass for that kiosk.

Mr. DeVlyder commented about the design for one of the kiosks. He said he couldn't figure out how it was designed and its use.

Ms. Simone said she'd was aware changes were made to some kiosks and that new nuts and bolts were used. She agreed to check out the changes.

Mr. Mercugliano said he was out at on the Quinnipiac River north of Black Road and asked who has jurisdiction over the river itself in that area.

Ms. Simone said it depends – some private properties go up to the river and some may even go into the middle of the river so it's really a moving target.

Mr. Mercugliano said there are actually quite a few tree falls that are blocking the river in that immediate area.

Ms. Simone said unfortunately that is more of a common occurrence. She explained the town has gone in the past when we've had the sponsored canoe trip but she believed the ones that are really active with it is the Quinnipiac River Watershed Association based out of Meriden because they do have a race they have annually. She said they go out in the early spring and clear that area.

Commission members discussed the Quinnipiac River and issues with navigating the river due to obstructions.

## IX. New Business

### 1. Fall Festival Recap

Chairman Sherman asked Mr. DeVlyder if he'd like to say a few words about that.

Mr. DeVlyder reported that he thought that it was the most people he had seen so far (at the festival) and he thought it was a real good showing.

Commission members talked about the Fall Festival event's success.

Mr. Mercugliano said he was pleased with the participation of folks coming up to our booth. He said they went through a very large volume of trail maps and many were knowledgeable about the trails and had a level of awareness about the trails.

## 2. National Public Lands Day

Chairman Sherman said National Public Lands Day is coming up on the calendar.

Ms. Simone informed Commission members this is an annual event and it was initially aimed at getting people out to national parks to help with clean ups and its grown since then.

Ms. Simone explained Cheshire has participated in previous years. She noted there aren't a lot of places in Connecticut that really participate in it – it's really something that happens more out west where they have wilderness and have a lot of people on large tracks of land.

Chairman Sherman noted there are three events in Connecticut and a half a dozen in Massachusetts and New York and a couple in Maine.

Chairman Sherman said because the Commission couldn't meet in the summer they really couldn't plan for anything. He said they did do something last year at the DeDominicis property which he thought was successful so perhaps they can look towards something for September 26, 2015 which is next year's event.

Mr. Mercugliano asked if it was too late to sponsor something this year.

Chairman Sherman said it does take some logistics and planning for an event to do it well and publicity is needed.

Mr. DeVylder asked about renaming the Dime Savings property. He suggested that they dump the name Dime Savings and come up with another name for the property.

Ms. Simone explained there is a procedure in place for a naming policy that has to go before the town council and there are requirements for naming properties.

Chairman Sherman asked in advance of next month's meeting if they could pull that out and review that and get the wheels in motion.

**Ms. Simone agreed to provide a copy of the naming policy and circulate it in advance of the next meeting and will put it on the agenda for new business.**

**Mr. Mercugliano asked over the last few months the subject has come up about trying to get some right of way or easement or at least access to that piece of property – what do we do to get the wheels going.**

**Ms. Simone said internally we've been looking at things and we have some things in the works – she said they are looking into it.**

**Mr. DeVlyder asked if they had a map of the property behind IGA.**

**Ms. Simone explained the property is landlocked from that area so you'd have to go through private property. She said we do have those maps and she could provide copies of those maps for the next meeting.**

**Ms. Simone confirmed IGA was the adjoining property. She said depending on which way you go on the trail another property you have to cross – there would be two properties depending on which way you go.**

**Mr. Mercugliano said the essence of his question would be to ask the property owners for permission if nothing else (to access their property to get to the open space site) at least as a temporary measure so the land is accessible.**

**Ms. Simone said that's been discussed in the past and the town attorney has been involved in drafting information that would have to be signed and in place.**

**Chairman Sherman said a couple of neighbors in that area of the town came and looked at the map and brochure and they expressed some curiosity if any progress was being made along those lines.**

## **X. Adjournment**

**Chairman Sherman called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m.**

**Moved by Mr. DeVlyder. Seconded by Mr. Abdifar. Motion approved unanimously by Commission members present.**

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**Carla Mills  
Recording Secretary**