

Starksboro Conservation Commission
July 26, 2023, 6:00 pm, Starksboro Public Library
Minutes

Present: Margi Gregory, Peg Casey, Jan McCleery, Robert Turner, Jennifer Lovett, pending member Alice Weston

March 2023 minutes were approved by unanimous vote. No minutes for April (trail work), No minutes for May (community event a Cota Field)

1. Updates

Invasive Species

Robert updated on the status of efforts to draft an invasive species plan for the southern riparian area. An inventory was done (60% of the area was visited, targeting the creek and woods). We discussed next steps and decided we should budget meeting time apart from regular meetings for work on the plan.

Action: Robert will outline next steps in the process and propose some dates at the next meeting.

Parsnip predator shovels. These have been delivered to the library and are available for patrons to borrow.

Signage at the Creekside Trail. Margi will install more signs, probably in Sept. Ideas for events were discussed: herb walk, scavenger hunt, nature journaling. No specific plans were made.

2. Maintenance and use of the Creekside Trail

Jan mentioned dog poop was a potential issue in certain areas. We discussed adding a log book for visitors to enter details of their visit. We'd like to know more about how much the trail gets used and by whom.

Action: Robert will attach a Rite-in-the-Rain book to the kiosk and a sign encouraging folks to log in.

3. Beaver issue in South Starksboro

Work was done in May/ June by the town road crew that included creating a grate around an existing culvert and opening up an active beaver dam to reduce the threat of a washout. Most Conservation Commission members were among the signers of a letter to the selectboard encouraging the town to consider alternative management strategies for protecting town infrastructure when beavers are a potential problem. Jennifer distributed a draft "statement" that could form the beginnings for a town "policy" regarding this. We agreed to take this item up at a future meeting.

Action: Robert will reach out to Rebecca to ask how the CC might assist in supporting the board. Robert will attend the July 25th select board meeting.

4. Town pavilion "festival" and other activities this fall.

October 18th is the expected date of the next town pavilion festival intended to bring folks out, display what's happening with town organizations and fund-raise for the pavilion roof. We discussed whether the CC's harvest dinner would add to or conflict with the focus on the town pavilion. No consensus was reached.

Action: Robert will reach out to Jody, Cecilia, Louis, Mike to see if they'd be willing to support the CC if we did sponsor a dinner in November as in the past.

Adjournment @ 7:44pm. Next meeting scheduled for 6:30 pm Monday, July 24th at the Library.