

**Approved meeting minutes
Huntington Conservation Commission (HCC)
September 9, 2010**

Meeting began 7:09pm, adjourned 9:06pm

Commissioners in attendance: Wally Jenkins (chair), Roman Livak, Laura Hill Bermingham, Margaret Fowle, Alan Brace, Cassandra Wilday
Commissioners absent: Sally Hillary

Wally called the meeting to order at 7:07pm

Review and approve minutes, review mail:

- Roman moved to approve the August meeting minutes as amended, Wally seconded the motion
- Unanimous approval, Margaret and Alan abstains their votes due to absence from the August meeting

Meeting time change

- Alan made a motion to change the monthly Thursday HCC meetings to 6-8pm (from 7-9pm) through the winter months (until April 2011)
- Laura seconded the motion
- Unanimous approval
- The new meeting time will go into effect in October 2010
- Margaret asked Wally to call the Times Ink to let them know of the meeting time change

No public comment

FY (Fiscal Year) 2011-2012 budget

- Wally mentioned that the Selectboard wants to meet with all town commissions by the end of October about the FYE2012 (Fiscal Year Ending 2012) budgets
- The Selectboard requested level funding
- Wally disseminated FYE10 and FYE11 budget numbers and reviewed actual expenses over the last few years in the following categories: dues/training, workshops/programs, operational supplies (i.e., sugarmaker's brochures), and purchase services.
- Cassandra asked if money not spent goes into the General Fund
- Wally explained that surplus funds defaults to the Selectboard, (e.g., the Moody Rd. bridge was partially funded by surplus funds). Money can be transferred, except for reserve funds.
- Margaret will contact Ed about actual FYE11 spending
- Alan and Wally decided that the donation would go toward workshops and programs in FYE12
- Roman asked if level funding for FYE12 includes salaries or not (i.e., \$1700 or \$2400?)
- Wally suggested that we submit the same budget as in November 2010 for FYE11 (i.e., \$2400)

- Roman suggested that we come up with ideas for specific training, workshops, etc. before we go in front of the Selectboard in October
- Alan made a motion to submit November 2010 budget for FYE11 as level funding in FYE12; Roman seconded, unanimous approval
- In FYE11, the HCC voted to reduce the Conservation Fund by 5% to \$15,200 (from \$16,000) for one year. Any additional modifications to the Fund would require a town vote, so the FYE12 budget for reserve funds remains at \$16,000.
- Roman asked whether we need to budget for the equipment or website costs for the Huntington River E. coli project. Wally suggested that the costs are so minimal that it is not worth adding onto the budget.

Scenic sampling

- The commission was given a total of 12 sites to use the scenic methodology to create a good baseline dataset with which to compare the scenic quality of potential Conservation Fund projects
- The HCC discussed issues with scenic sampling methodology, including viewing sites on cloudy days, interpretation of the viewing spot, what view do we value (i.e., 360 degree views or trees?)
- There was a lengthy discussion of the Contrast question under “Scenic quality rating”
- Wally asked if we want to interpret the following: “Contrast: Open Meadow within proposed Village II District (Village Gateway)” in the way in which it is written in the Scenic Inventory report as “A clear distinction between village and countryside”?
- The emphasis is on *contrast* in the scenery
- Commissioners all agreed after some discussion
- Data analysis will occur in October, followed by a discussion of individual ratings
- Wally brought up an interesting point after reading a book on climate change in the Adirondacks written by Jerry Jenkins
- Clearing a forest for development, even just an acre, greatly increases CO₂ emissions (i.e., Wally recalls that for every 1 acre of woods cut for housing = 220 tons of CO₂ are released)
- Wally sees a conflict: protect scenic views vs. develop in forested areas but contribute to climate change
- Roman asked about using open land for food production, or maintaining it for its scenic quality
- Wally replied that we must know where the prime agricultural land is and use it for food, not housing
- Cassandra asked about prime forestland – where does this exist? Do we know?
- Roman said that we should also make use of the subprime agricultural land for growing crops in wet areas, like rice
- Cassandra and Alan discussed developing along the forest/meadow edges, and Roman mentioned that this is part of the Planning Commission’s wording

HCC Annual Retreat

- The retreat will be held at Alan’s house at the top of Trapp Rd. (white house with a red

- roof)
- Saturday, October 2 at 3:30pm meeting until 5pm, potluck to follow
- Commissioners agreed on what everyone will bring for food, drinks, etc.

Updates

Bland property

- Alan commented that after reading the minutes, it seems as if they have some legwork to do before approaching the HCC for Conservation Funds
- There is no new news on potential buyers or the state of the purchase and sales agreement

Special Places River Walk

- Wally said 13 people attended and 1 was a riverfront property owner
- Gretchen Alexander's flume demonstration was very good and everyone seemed to enjoy it and find it educational

Energy books for library

- Wally ordered the renewable energy books for the library
- He will ask Wendy to post a notice when they are available

Photo contest

- Alan would like to find the negatives of his pictures of lightning strikes in Huntington
- Margaret will take September and post a photo with the photo contest alert at the library, and Alan will take October for posting his pictures
- Laura will send the Word template to commissioners to use for printing digital photos and the announcement

Website

- Roman will contact Will Keyworth for an update

Other business

- Road crew and conservation issues email sent by Wally – follow up?
- Margaret has a friend who is on the Bakersfield conservation commission who has worked with the town road crew and will get in contact for ideas
- Possible interest of conservation commission: zoning and conservation issues, quantity of salt used on roads, and dust control chemicals
- Laura suggested that it would be a good retreat topic

Adjourn: Roman moved to adjourn at 9:06pm, Cassandra seconded, unanimous approval

Date unapproved minutes to town clerk: September 12, 2010
Date approved minutes to town clerk: October 26, 2010