

Conservation Commission Minutes

3/6/17

Present: Bob McKeagney, Dan Hogan, Megan Sheehan, Jody Meredith

Absent: Bret Bergst, Rick Foss-Lacey, Barbara Dee

Guest: Jessica Williams Energy and Recycling Committee

Minutes from 2/20/17 are delayed until next week. Megan will send out to members (secretary could not attend that meeting).

Megan reported that the City Council preferred our membership to be seven members even though we had requested a nine member commission. After some discussion, we agreed to try the seven member size.

Open Space Inventory -

There will be a final meeting of this group on 3/7/17 in order to inform all participants of the plan to advocate for a full Open Space Planning process. To gain background information, Dan contacted the town planner of Falmouth who is in the process of developing an open space plan with the help of outside support. He also found that Cape Elizabeth did their plan in-house.

Planning for From Brooks to Bay -

Bob, Bret and Fred are working on finalizing the grant process using the Freshwater Compensation Fund. Bob recently received a Freshwater Compensation Fund Report from Fred Dillon that has a lot of helpful information in it. He will get copies of that report to members of the Commission. All agreed that City Council Members need to be informed.

Bob developed a matrix on how to evaluate potential projects for the Commission. Members agreed that it seems like a very helpful tool.

The Conservation Law Foundation would like to be involved.

Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District will send two representatives to participate in planning.

The next meeting of the planning group for this event will focus on having the brochure ready, developing a publicity plan and finalizing guides for the stream walks.

We decided that during the stream walks, we will encourage participants to do clean up and will supply bags and gloves.

We discussed getting gift certificates from local businesses to raffle off during the forum - both as a way to generate interest and as a way to gather email addresses

Jody will search for photographs of the streams from the Historical Society.

Bob will get the mailing list from the Planning Department to notify residents who are near the streams about the forum.

To access the CBEP funds that we received for the forum, Jody will contact Greg L'Heureux, South Portland Finance Director.

Additional Items -

Dan is monitoring City Council agendas to see when conservation related topics are on the agenda. He noted that Old Joe's Pond is on the workshop list, but will not come up in the near future.

Minutes - South Portland Conservation Commission
4/24/2017

Attending: Megan Sheehan, Dan Hogan, Bret Bergst, Rick Foss-Lacey, Bob McKeagney, Barbara Dee, Jody Meredith

Planning for Freshwater Streams Forum:

Event plan:

Introduction of Commission and Purpose for Forum - Megan Sheehan
Water Quality Standards and Urban Impaired Category - Wendy Garland
Importance of Casco Bay to Region and Current Condition of Bay - Matt Craig
Streams of South Portland and Actions to Improve Them - Fred Dillon
Introduction of Freshwater Compensation Fund Grant Program - Bob McKeagney
Information on Stream Walks - Megan Sheehan
Raffle Results - Bret Bergst
Question and Answer Time - All
Break into Watershed Groups

Participating Groups

Energy and Recycling Committee
Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District
Casco Bay Estuary Partnership
U.S. Fish and Wildlife
South Portland Land Trust
Friends of Casco Bay
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Protect South Portland
? Pesticide Information Group

Discussion of Facebook Page - updates have been posted about the Forum. We need to get management of the page back from Bob Klotz. Bret has been in contact and will follow up.

Needed for the Event - painter's tape for stream map (Megan), food (Jody), raffle bowl (Bret), Info sheet on stream walks (Jody), stars for map (Megan), backup technology plan (all of us).

Freshwater Compensation Fund Grants - Bob M. has met with Pat Cloutier who agrees with the proposal. Bob is developing guidelines for prospective applicants. There is a need to develop a longer term plan for using the rest of these funds. We will take up this issue after the forum.

Open Space Letter

Commissioners agreed that it was ok to send. Planning for next steps is an agenda item for next week's meeting.

O'Neil Street

Agenda item for next week's meeting.

Meeting Room

Agreed that the conference room at the Recreation Center is a good place to meet. Dan also suggested South Portland Housing Authority's meeting room at 100 Waterman Drive. Jody will call to find out about the availability of the Rec Center conference room.

Conservation Commission Minutes
5/1/17

Present: Megan Sheehan, Bob McKeagney, Jody Meredith, Dan Hogan, Bret Bergst
Absent: Barbara Dee

Minutes from 4/24/17 were approved

Rick Foss-Lacey has resigned from the Commission, so there is a current opening from Councilor Rose's district. There is someone who has expressed interest. Dan will email the City Clerk to find out how to proceed.

As a result of the Stream Forum, we have had two people express interest in applying for the Freshwater Compensation Fund grants - one a resident near Trout Brook who wants to work on reducing invasive plants, and another to build a raingarden. In preparing for the awarding of grants, Bob has met with Pat Cloutier of Water Resources Protection. Bob created and distributed a number of documents to guide applicants and to help with the management of the grants. Each grant recipient will have a member of the Commission to oversee the implementation of the grant. Additionally Bob presented a proposal for working more closely with the Water Resources Protection Department and recommended a meeting of Megan, Bob and Pat Cloutier in the near future to discuss priorities. Pat will also attend one of the Commission's meetings in the near future. Bob will also email a copy of the Freshwater Compensation Fund 2001 report to members of the Commission.

The first guided stream walk will be on Saturday, May 6th at 9:00 am on Red Brook. Tom Blake will be leading. We are still having trouble accessing the Commission's Facebook page which is listed as the contact point for interested residents. Bret, Megan and Jody will all work to get the word out. Bret will prepare a spreadsheet of the email addresses of those who attended the forum. We will email all Forum attendees prior to the stream walks. May 13, 2017 will be the Trout Brook walk with Wendy Garland and Jon Dore. May 20, 2017 will be Barberry Creek and members of the Commission will guide on that walk. Other guides for Kimball and Long Creek will be decided at the next meeting.

In reflecting about the Stream Forum, most felt that the event itself was informative and provided good contacts with other environmental organizations. The turnout for the event was about 50 people - a large number of whom were there from environmental organizations. All felt it would have been positive to have a greater connection with the schools at the event.

The Open Space letter has been sent. We need to determine what the next steps should be and maintain consistency of communication. Further discussion of the request for an Open Space Planning Process and the development of O'Neill Street will be covered in the next meeting.

Next meeting, May 15th at 6:30 at the conference room at the South Portland Recreation Center.