

Conservation Commission of the Town of Halifax, Vermont: Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2019

Present: Stephan Chait (SC), Jessica Cooney (JC), Laurel Copeland (LC), Linda Huebner (LH), Dov Towler (DT)

Meeting convened 7:00 pm at the Town Clerk Office

1. **Minutes** - Voted to amend and approve the previous meeting minutes, of July 27, 2019.
2. **New Business: Recycling Hazardous Materials** – Windham Solid Waste Management District Hazardous Material Event on October 19, 2019. Stephan spoke with Athena Lee Bradley of the Windham Solid Waste Management District regarding their next opportunity to drop off hazardous household waste. He provided the members of the HCC with copies of a flyer from their June 2019 event. The location of the event is TBD. Athena will provide the updated flyer by Sept. 23rd. The HCC could help get the word out to Halifax residents. Ideas for communication venues included:
 - a. Website announcement (Town of Halifax)
 - b. Town Clerk/PO/Halifax Center mailboxes paper postings
 - c. Direct mail - \$200+ costs – not feasible for HCC
 - d. FaceBook
 - e. Front Porch Forum (FPF)

Ideas for content included using parts of the WSWMD flyer and noting at the bottom, “Sponsored by Halifax Conservation Commission”.

3. **New Business: Add Mission Statement to Conservation Commission page on Town website** – JC will generate a PDF of the Mission Statement. SC will ask Robbin Gabriel to post it.
4. **New Business: Next Steps with Inventories** – LC reported that she had gotten sidetracked by attending the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) inventory workshop in Guilford and was concerned with this invasive beetle. The EAB is mapped in Vermont on the website, vtinvasives.org. Although it is mostly north of us, it cannot be stopped. Infestation kills off most ash trees within 6 years leading to higher than usual number of falling trees with resultant damage to roads, buildings, cars, etc. This discussion led to the general topic of invasives, and how the HCC can alert Halifax residents to these species (e.g., knotweed, wild parsnip, EAB). On a related topic, some residents need to learn about beneficial species that should be encouraged in Halifax, especially plants that support pollinators. The HCC will develop a list of invasives (LC with others?).
5. **New Business: Newsletter** – SC noted that he receives the Dummerston CC newsletter via email. Although we can propose items in their newsletter, we might want to develop notices to send out or post on a regular basis to achieve our community education goals.
6. **New Business: E-mail address for Halifax Conservation Commission** – JC will create a gmail address for the HCC to use in postings and other outreach materials. Suggestions included keeping “Halifax” in the name, e.g., “HalifaxConservation”, “HalifaxConserv”, and so on. Shorter names such as “HalCons” and longer names such as “HalifaxConservationCommission” were less preferred.
7. **Old Business: Cultural Resources** – Dov’s friend Rich Holschuh has previously said he can come speak to us for about 30 minutes about Abenaki Indians in the Halifax area. We should set

a date that works for Rich H. We can, as previously suggested, coordinate with Halifax Historical Society, but LC noted their active membership is around 6 persons.

8. **Old Business: Thurber Road Trail** –The Select Board ruled that keeping the Class 3 part of Thurber Road as is, and designating the town trail part of Thurber Road as a Class 4 town road, would constitute the best use of town resources. Therefore, the residents on the Class 3 part will not be closing off the road with their horse pasture. The residents on the Class 4 part will be responsible for snowplowing that part. The Town is responsible for culvert maintenance on Class 4 roads and for both culverts and snowplowing on Class 3 roads.
9. **Old Business: Halifax Conservation Commission on Social Media** –JC has begun work on a fb page, currently “HCC”. She noted that 2 administrators are required. LC volunteered to be the 2nd administrator.
10. **Old Business: Logo** – JC presented additional images based on symbols of the state of Vermont. Members will contemplate options at the next meeting.
11. **Other Business** – Chris Schadler of Project Coyote put on an informative event on 8/25/2019 that JC attended. Resources: <https://www.ProjectCoyote.org>; <https://www.protectourwildlifevt.org>.
12. **Other Business** – DT went on the Green River Project bus tour and reported it was wonderful. There were about 2 dozen attendees in 2 large vans. The tour visited covered bridges and the reconstructed island in Guilford; they saw Beaver Deceivers in Marlboro, arriving at dusk when the beavers were coming out. The tour ended at Hogback as the stars were coming out. The event was free, provided snacks, and included people from both VT and MA. Highly recommended by DT.
13. **Other Business** – Mike Clough (Southern Vermont Natural History Museum) talked at the BEEC about the upcoming Mount Snow Wildlife Festival at the end of September (9/22/2019; <https://www.mountsnow.com/events/calendar/9th-annual-vermont-wildlife-festival/>). JC went last year and found that the live animals were cool, the bones interesting, and the traps disturbing. The event is sponsored by Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. Vermont Fish & Wildlife has a presence at the event.
14. **Next Meeting** – To accommodate schedule conflicts, the September HCC meeting will be on Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2019 at 7:00 pm rather than 4th Tuesday.

Meeting adjourned 8:33 pm