

THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF HALIFAX, P.O. BOX 127, WEST HALIFAX, VT 05358
Meeting Tuesday, March 23, 2021 6:30 PM

Meeting on Zoom (Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7814490827> or call +19292056099,7814490827#)

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER at 6:32 pm; Stephan Chait (Chair; SC), Jess Cooney (JC), Dov Towler (DT), Linda Huebner (Treasurer; LH), Laurel Copeland (Clerk; LC), Lesley Pollitt (LP), Cara Cheyette (CC), Mary Horne (MH), Andrea Rand (AR).

CHANGES AND/OR ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – posting the agenda is added.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

February 25, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes – approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Deerfield River Initiative – seeking letters of support from town select boards to designate the river as “wild and scenic”. Robbin Gabriel is drafting such as letter from Halifax SB. A flyer was distributed to HCC members on 3/17 and to tonight’s visitors tonight.

Meeting Day and Time – officially 4th Tuesdays at 7:00 pm. We changed to 6:30 to take advantage of daylight, and we changed to Thursday to deal with conflicts. AR usually works Thursday nights but said that is dynamic. LH, DT and LC favor Thursday; LH would like to get outside again; 6:30 pm on 4th Thursday works for JC as well. In April, Robbin will set out the calendar for the new fiscal year; we will request that the official day and time be listed as 4th Thursday at 6:30 pm.

Posting Agenda – Robbin Gabriel, the Selectboard Secretary, has been posting our agenda on the town website as well as putting up hard copies in the Town Office and Post Office. Going forward we need to find a Commission member to post the hard copies at the Town Office and Post Office. Robbin will be stepping down when a replacement can be found.

[ACTION ITEM] JC volunteered to post the hard copies of the agenda the Saturday or Sunday before the meeting. SC will post at Halifax Center.

OLD BUSINESS

Green-up Day 2021 on May 1st

Possible Materials for Halifax Elementary School – JC gets the materials from the green-up website and works with Patty Dow to get them posted. JC will do activity books with the kids. Patty Dow put forth information on the contests for the kids.

[ACTION ITEM] Help get the word out!

Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles (EV) – JC will talk with Kristine Sweeter regarding advocating for an EV charge station at the Whitingham Free Public Library. CC has a Volt (range up to 300 miles). She mentioned that Jen Burnell in Whitingham mentioned that Riggs Distler might have one (?) and that having the small towns work together is a great idea.

[ACTION ITEM] JC will talk with Kristine Sweeter.

Beavers Educational Flyer – Production and Mailing Costs and Logistics – C&S pricing was about half the initial estimate; C&S estimate includes tri-folding the flyer and a discount for nonprofit status (Town of Halifax). The letter in black & white is about \$40; with color (for the logo) it is \$88. The HCC has \$500 in the budget, and two members want to donate some funds. AR is willing to donate funds or envelopes (can get 50% discount at Staples). We will have an envelope-stuffing session soon. **[ACTION ITEM]** Provide feedback on the wording of the cover letter and flyer.

Green Burials – no update regarding having green burials in Town cemeteries or about Manitu. CC asked whether the Commission might be providing information to persons wanting to bury their family members on their own property; she will try to bring information to the commission. Laws have changed recently regarding where and how deep bodies may be buried. In terms of legal issues, it may be as simple as telling the town clerk the coordinates of the body. AR was just talking with cemetery commissioner DeForest who commented that the last four plots have just been sold. West Halifax, Niles are full; Pennel Hill has space. Cemetery commission would have to clear trees. AR commented that all 23 cemeteries in Halifax are in disrepair. LP commented that Penfield Chester knows a lot about green burial. **[ACTION ITEM]** CC will seek info on the legal issues.

Report on Site Visit at School
Next Steps – No update.

OTHER BUSINESS – LH asked whether we still have access to last year’s budget giving up \$1000 to spend. SC believes the initial \$500 was not augmented. DT commented that it was an unusual year which contributed to our lack of expenditures.

HEARING OF VISITORS – CC commended the Halifax Conservation Commission for our active fb page and breadth of work. She also mentioned that the recycling area at the garage is still confusing because the signs and bins have inconsistent messages. LP voiced enjoyment of the issues especially beaver education. AR described the wash-out of the lower beaver dam in the village (bottom of Sprague at Branch Road). JC confirmed the washout was by the storm. DT said those on the Green River were similarly washed out by the storm. AR and Gary will cut a tree that fell on a walkway behind the school. LH commented that someone in town plans to post Protect Our Wildlife flyers about protecting beavers and moose. AR reported seeing a newly chewed and felled pine tree, indicating current beaver activity. MH expressed enthusiasm over the scope of the HCC activities.

NEXT MEETING Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 6:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT at 7:36 pm.