

Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission
Minutes of March 16th, 2021 Meeting

In attendance by Zoom: Eleanor Park, Ellen Scull, Francine Mayhew, Jane Ayres, Ann Ratcliff, Elena Scotti, Ann Judd; Kristin Hutchins – ex Officio; Misha Mytar – Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Minutes of the January 5, 2021 were approved

- 1 **Treasurer's Update:** Jane reported that the Tree Fund Appeal has brought in about \$4,500 since fall. This is excellent news as we prepare for sharing costs of the tree planting at Pemetic School this spring. Ann J. reported that about \$1000 has come into the PayPal in donations for the Charlotte Rhoades since the fall and will be transferred to the Commission's savings account.

- 2 **Tree Fund.** Ann Ratcliff reported that the estimate for planting two new trees and adding landscaping in the area in between them was revised by Frost Farms to reflect an increase in materials, bringing the cost of the project up another \$1,000 to just under \$6,000.

Ann R did request from the school that they pay for half of the project, and they have agreed to put \$2,500 aside for it.

Ann Judd spoke to Williams Irrigation to get an estimate on a watering system that conceivably will tie into the Town's main line under the entrance driveway. Ann, Eleanor and Ann will work on a way to accomplish this over the next few weeks.

Eleanor has been in touch with the arborist about scheduling upcoming tree work (No work was performed last fall). Ann J will check on the amount approved by the Commission last fall (2020) for spring tree work.

- 3 **Rhoades Park** Ann Judd reported that she is looking for a part time employee for seasonal work in 2021. New swings will be installed in May. The park will unofficially be open by May and visitation protocols for the summer will be decided by June. The spring pruning class was cancelled for mid-April. Some weddings have been booked, and Ann asked the Commission for help with the decision to hold the Butterfly Release scheduled for July 29th. After some discussion, everyone felt that the Butterfly Release could take place with protocols in effect (such as mask wearing or Covid shots completed) and amending certain details of the event so that it would be safe for all. More than ever, Ann will have to depend on everyone's help to have the event go on and will work to make necessary adjustments for its success.

- 4 **Chris' Pond** Misha and Maine Coast Heritage Trust extended the purchase option agreement so that the Town has until the end of August to make a decision about the Letcher property. She has spoken with acting Town Manager Dana Reed about

preparing the grant application from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and has sought help from Select Board member Carolyn Ball to help write it.

Misha circulated a concept plan prepared by Johnson and Associates that showed how the Letcher property could be parceled for Chris' Pond users and for the Island Housing Trust. This information will need to be presented to the Select Board once it has been carefully considered by the Commission, Maine Coast Heritage Trust and other stakeholders.

After some discussion Misha and the Commission members agreed that it would be very helpful to have a small advisory sub-Committee to help move this project along. Conservation Commission members Jane Ayres and Ann Ratcliff offered to help on the sub-committee and the following were identified as possible additional members: Carolyn Ball, Noel Musson, Jim Geary, Ryan Donahue, and Lake Rosso.

Next Meeting: April 2021, TBD