

Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission
October 15, 2019 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Jane Ayres Treasurer, Kristin Hutchins ex-officio, Ann Judd Secretary, Francine Mayhew, Ellen Scull, Ann Ratcliff (Absent/Excused: Susan Allen, Terry Powers)

Minutes of the September 11th were approved.

I Treasurer's report Jane reported that now that the construction project at the Charlotte Rhoades is mostly completed. The construction checking account has been closed and any remaining funds have been moved to the Project Savings account. While she also intended to close the savings and move all funds into our main checking account, the savings is yielding a very good interest rate, so funds will sit in the savings account until it is time to move them either to the Maine Community Foundation Endowment or to our regular checking account for small projects. The Commission approved adding \$50,000 to the Maine Community Foundation endowment this fall. The Commission also approved moving funds to create a Conservation Commission Reserve account (separate from Town Budget), up to \$21,000. Voters will need to approve this income at Town meeting in May; the funds will cover Charlotte Rhoades docent labor in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 budgets.

A Tree Fund budget request was approved for the same amount as in previous years. Ann J. was confused about the Conservation Commission budget; it appears that no budget was allotted for this year, so she will check with the Town Manager and Town Treasurer. The 2020-21 budget will be considered at the next meeting. The Charlotte Rhoades budget includes an appropriation for a Park Manager/Volunteer Coordinator (who will be hired shortly). In the future the docent salary will be covered by the endowment. The Commission approved the Charlotte Rhoades budget.

II Tree Update Ann J. told the commission that she had spoken with the Pemetic Principal about removal of the elm tree at the driveway exit. The school and Town will be working out the future parking and landscaping plan over the next couple of years, and most likely any new trees or landscaping will be a Town project, not a Commission project. Eleanor mentioned that the school will pay \$2500 of the cost to remove the tree; the work will be done during a school vacation by arborist Kris Harper.

Ann R. talked about the need to redefine what the Tree Fund mission and policies are so that townspeople/tree owners are clear on what the Tree Fund can and cannot do, for example, with respect to shade trees that are situated on our main streets but are on private property. Ann will work with Eleanor to make a presentation to the Selectmen. Eleanor was unanimously voted by the Commission to be a 2nd Tree Warden. Jane will ask Jeff Dutra for the Tree Warden information box so that the ordinance written some years ago (and not voted upon) can be reviewed for policies and mission statement.

III Charlotte Rhoades Park By the end of the month the gardens will be readied for winter. Brush has been ordered to be put down the first week in December. A new commercial swing will be purchased for installation next spring. Some additional trees and shrubs will need be purchased next season to fill in buffer areas. New brochures are in, and a double rack card has been printed. One side explains the Monarch migration; the other side describes the three native milkweeds grown in Maine.

IV Deer Management

Francine reported on 32 weeks of study of car/deer accidents taken from published police reports on MDI. Between May 2019 and June 16, 2019 there were 19 reported accidents. Over 32 weeks there have been 82 car accidents involving deer. Next month Francine will give a tally of accidents occurring over a 12 month period.

V Other Commission members thanked Eleanor Park for tidying up the area around the Larue Spiker memorial on the Harbor House front lawn. It has needed attention for some time and Eleanor stepped up and made it look a lot better.

Next meeting: November 14 or 15