

Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission
Wednesday, November 1st, 2023 @ 430pm
Town Offices and by Zoom
Draft Minutes

I. Call to Order: Ann Ratcliff called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm with a review of meeting operations: **THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM THAT IS LISTED ON THIS AGENDA.** *Public comment, limited to 3 minutes per speaker, is an opportunity for the Commission to listen to concerns and receive information from the public. The Commission will not engage in dialogue but will investigate as appropriate. Speakers and Commission members should be always respectful and professional.*

II. Roll Call: Voting Members Present: Francine Mayhew, Co-chair; Ann Ratcliff, Co-chair; Kathy Lindquist; Ellen Scull; Kathleen Slack; Kristin Hutchins; by Zoom: Eleanor Park

Associate Members Present: Elena Scotti, Valerie Bodner, Dick Dimond and by Zoom: Ann Judd, Terry Powers. **Excused:** Jim Geary

Guests: Aimée Williams and by Zoom: Leann Rhoades

III. Approval of Agenda: Kathleen moved, Kathy seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Passed, 7-0-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes: Francine moved, Kathy seconded to approve the minutes of October 4, 2023 as presented. Passed, 7-0-0.

V. Motion and Vote to allow any action to be voted on at this meeting. It was agreed that this item was redundant and would be struck from future agendas.

VI. Reports, Updates and Communications: Agreed by consensus to appoint Kristin as Secretary with continued assistance from Ann Judd.

- A. Conservation Commission Administrative Budget FY '24-'25: Kathleen moved, Francine seconded to approve the budget request of \$2275 as presented*. Passed, 7-0-0. Ann and Ann will work on a narrative for presentation to the Select Board.
- B. Tree Warden Update:
 1. Eleanor reported that arborist, Billy Guess, Eagle Arboriculture, took down the tree overhanging the Pemetec middle school swing set for a cost of \$1500, payment to be split with the Tree Fund and Pemetec.
 2. Public Works Foreman, Scott Alley and Harbor House are concerned about two trees on the lawn of Harbor House. Scott consulted with Kris Harper to prune and remove them as necessary. Ann R will verify whether this expense will be paid by Public Works.
- C. Veteran's Park Update: FY '24 – '25 Budget. Ann J spoke with the Town Manager who agreed with Ann's recommendation to establish a Town Reserve for unexpected annual expenditures for damaged or worn out plantings. Mowing and other seasonal scheduled maintenance chores are covered in the Public Works budget. Ann recommended that the Conservation Commission ask for a reserve of approximately 10% of the anticipated budget for the planned renewal of the Park. The members agreed that over time, this figure may need adjusting. Ellen said the scope of work will include maintenance to walkways, pavers and shrubs. The fundraiser letters (1300 pieces) will be mailed next week. Thanks to everyone who helped prepare the mailing. The Garden Club of Mount Desert has already donated \$2000 toward the \$16,000 appeal goal and have further promised \$500 worth of allium and tulip bulbs. The Commission should make appropriate thanks by letter or card for these donations. Ellen moved, Kathy seconded to approve the Veteran's Park Renovation Budget as presented**. Passed, 7-0-0.

D. Chris' Pond Update:

1. Elena has reviewed the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant opportunity administered by Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. She has drafted a document breaking up the project by topic and timeline. She went over it in some detail and the members agreed that this was helpful. She recommended that members go to the online link: https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/recreational_trails_program.shtml and read the grant application. She cautioned the Commission to pay attention to the requirements for spending and hiring subcontractors. Carolyn Ball has volunteered to write the narrative. Elena suggested a number of other people in our community for their expertise in relevant elements of the project. Thank you, Elena! Ann R will get on the next Select Board agenda, 11.14.23, to make a presentation on the RTP Grant opportunity and ask for support to pursue. She will also reach out to skaters and other winter users to find a liaison with that community. And, the Commission will ask the Select Board to finalize their approval of Chris's Pond signage.
2. Valerie will update the Commission on aquatic studies at Chris's Pond. If benthic studies have not been done, they should probably wait until spring. Bonnie Norwood's science class has taken collection samples and performed pH analysis. Valerie will report next time on the results of the water analysis from Maine Environmental Laboratories in Yarmouth. *Valerie, is it a stream or a pond or something else?*

VII. Old Business

VIII. Adjournment: Kristin moved, Kathleen seconded to adjourn the meeting. Passed, 7-0-0.

NEXT MEETING DATE: December 6, 2023 at 4:30pm

***SWH Conservation Commission Administrative Budget, FY: 7.1.24 – 6.30.25**

Projected Income / Budget Request	\$2275
Projected Expenses	
Supplies, mailings, bookkeeping services	\$650
Dues	125
<u>Chris's Pond Reserve</u>	<u>1500</u>
Expense Total	\$2275

****Veteran's Park Renovation Budget, FY: 7.1.24 – 6.30.25**

Projected Income	
Budget Request:	\$1750
<u>Park Appeal</u>	<u>16,000</u>
Total Income	\$17,750

Projected Expenses	
Replacement plantings	
Power washing	
Resetting pavers	
Labor and Materials	\$15,000
Contingency	1000
<u>Town Reserve</u>	<u>1750</u>
Total Expenses	\$17,750