

Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission
August 22, 2018
Minutes

In attendance: Jane Ayres, Ann Ratcliff, Terry Powers, Ellen Scull, Ann Judd, Francine Mayhew.
Absent: Eleanor Parks, Susan Allen, Melissa Frost, Barbara Amstutz

I May 2018 Town Meeting Budget Approval

Ann reported that the \$25,000 warrant request for the Rhoades renovation project was approved. The money will be used towards the creation of a new driveway, new parking lot, and house demolition. In addition, \$12,000 has been in reserve for this project for a few years.

II Treasurer's Report

Jane reported that we are ready for our construction project. Some additional income has come in this summer for the Charlotte Rhoades endowment. We may be able to move some funds from the annual fundraiser to the Maine Community Foundation endowment as well. A draw from the MCF will be transferred to our yearly Town budget in 2019 for the salaries for the docents. Jane will have a full Treasurer's report at our next meeting.

III Rhoades Park

1. *Visitation, fundraisers and events, and gate donations.* Ann Judd reported that donations have been up significantly in 2018 along with increased visitation. The Commission decided to raise certain suggested donations next season: The Butterfly Release ticket will increase from \$30 to \$35; the gate donation will increase from \$2 to \$3; the wedding ceremony donation will increase to \$250 for residents, and \$300 for non-residents, effective for bookings after January 2019.
2. *Summer/Fall Events 2018.* In addition to the Butterfly Release on July 26th, weekly Tai Chi classes, Yoga, Wednesday morning garden tours, and children's "I Spy" activities have been offered all summer. Docents Martina Dittmar and Elizabeth Byard have done a great job greeting visitors and offering information and Monarch tagging demonstrations as well. One Garden club and two disabled visitor groups were guided by our docents in July and early August. Fall field trips will occur on September 5th and 7th mornings for local elementary schools. There have been 5 weddings on the schedule this summer; the last one will occur on September 8th. Next summer we hope to offer Junior Naturalist tours, painting classes and a Monarch monitoring program in addition to programs initiated this season.

Construction Project. Water/Sewer and electricity will be shut off during the week of September 10th. The irrigation will be "winterized" as well. The sign will be taken down and the Park will close on September 15th in anticipation of the demolition of the Rhoades House. The site work will start the week of September 17th. The new building will be up and hopefully finished by late fall. A new well will be dug so that the Park will not be obliged to pay the (expensive) Water Dept. bills other than minimum sewer in the future.

IV Tree Business

1. *The Tree Fund Appeal* was processed during the meeting, with members stuffing envelopes to be mailed out August 23rd.
2. *Tree Work for fall* will need to be scheduled with arborist Kris Harper.

Action Item: Eleanor Park, Asst. Tree Warden, will work on a date for a tree inspection with Kris, Eleanor, Jeff Dutra, Tree Warden, with assistance from Ann Ratcliff.

Tree Removals in 2018 One of the Pemetic Elms on Main Street was removed for safety reasons in late February.

New tree plantings. The Commission was in favor of planting a new street tree on the front lawn of Pemetic School to replace the elm that was removed.

Action Item: Ann Ratcliff will be in touch with Pemetic School about our interest in locating a new shade tree close to Main Street. At issue is whether Pemetic intends to provide additional parking (asphalt) where presently there is lawn; the new parking could adversely affect a shade tree planting.

Becky Madeira would like to give a memorial tree planting to honor Ian Marshall, past member of the Conservation Commission. This tree might be planted at Pemetic, or possibly Harbor House. Ann Judd suggested that Pemetic has custodians that could help with watering; Harbor House does not appear to have help with the landscaping, and the plantings at Harbor House are in pretty bad shape.

Town Christmas Tree. Terry inquired about the Christmas tree that is put up in the Veterans Park in early December. The tree looked pretty sad last year; questions about who installs and decorates it led to discussion about a possible Christmas tree memorial fundraiser event suggested by Ann Ratcliff. We will revisit and decide about the fundraiser at our next meeting. *Action Item: Terry will research who will supply and decorate the Town Christmas tree for 2018. (Our Beautification Fund might help to pay for a better tree; this to be discussed at our next meeting also)*

V Other Business

1. Upper Town Dock improvements will be put on a future agenda for discussion of possible tree or shrub plantings.
3. Village Green Way improvements will also be put on a future agenda for similar discussion.

Next meeting: We will look to schedule our next meeting the week of the 24th of September.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Judd, Secretary