

TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
April 5, 2022  
6:00 P.M.  
Municipal Building, Council Room

PRESENT:

Tristen Hinkle, Chairman  
Kate Drummond, Vice Chairman  
Corey Hinkle  
Barry Sites  
Larry Taylor  
Cynthia Kirk, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Dylan Engler, Matt Keister, Corey Johnson

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

**QUORUM:**

Conservation Commission meeting called to order at 6:00 PM, quorum was present.

**1) MINUTES OF THE February 1, 2022 CONSERVATION MEETINGS TO BE APPROVED:**

Motion by Tristen Hinkle to approve the February 1, 2022 Conservation Committee minutes as written.  
Seconded by Barry Sites. Motion passed 5-0.

**2) OLD BUSINESS:**

**A) Tree planting confirmation of tree order and cost, select day and time for planting, other locations for trees? Do we advertise?**

Tristen said she has talked to Kristina Cannon at Main Street regarding the Village revitalization plan that is going to be happening in the downtown. She said Main Street just received a very large grant that they will be using toward this plan. The plan they are looking to do would include river access and decking going from the Old Mill Pub down towards the area behind Unwined which is the same area that they had discussed planting some trees in. Therefore, the commission might want to look into some other areas in town instead. Tristen said there is an open space in the downtown that a tree died in as well as a space by Keybank where a tree got hit by a car and knocked down.

Barry asked if they don't end up doing any planting this year, if the money can be held over until next year. Yes, it can. Larry suggested that maybe they still do some planting this year but cut the number of trees down to 5 instead of 10. He said they should be able to come up with 5 spots a little easier. Tristen also said they could somehow reach out to residents as well.

It was decided to request 5 trees (red maples and sugar maples) from Lakewood Nursery and let him know they made need the other 5 in the future.

**B) Update on Whitten Brook, review of selectman presentation, and last recommendation from Kerem and Jen**

Tristen said the goal now is to apply for the 319 grant in March 2023. Before that can be done, they need to update the restoration plan. She said Jen Jesperson is going to get her an editable copy and make notes on the sections that they can update themselves. Once that is done then they will send it back to Jen to update the more technical items. Tristen said the other grant they were looking to pair with the 319 grant would require applications in August or December 2023. Based on this timeline they would be looking at a 2024 project.

Barry asked if the updating of the restoration plan can be done during their meetings or outside of the regular meetings. Tristen said her and Kate can probably work on it outside of the meetings and report back to them. Tristen also said that Kerem at the DOT that has been working with them on the stormwater aspect of this project is no longer working in that department. However, another person within that department that has worked with Kerem on this project will continue helping them.

Kate said that the presentation that her and Tristen made to the Selectmen went very well. She said there were even some Selectmen that didn't even realize what Whitten Brook was and its location in town. She said that they were very happy to now have that information. Tristen said it was also a good way to get the Conservation Commission out there to let people know what they are all about and what they have been working on.

### **C) Newsletter? Are we ready to send?**

Tristen said that she had a few other people read over the newsletter and give some suggestions on things they might want to change in it. She also said that Dylan has reached out to Jeremy Bourque at the high school about also using Infographic as well. Jeremy said he would be happy to work on it see about making it into an Infographic. Kate said she would be happy to collaborate with the high school on this. Tristen said either way they want to send it out is fine with her. Kate said before they send it out why don't they send it the graphic arts department at the high school and see what they come up with.

### **D) Somerset woods clean-up day on April 30th, do we want to co-sponsor or help out? Or schedule our own day?**

Kate said that the Somerset Woods Trustees are scheduling this cleanup day and thought that instead of them having a cleanup day and the Conservation Commission having a separate one that maybe they could work together. She said she hasn't asked Somerset Woods yet about combining but she wanted to know how everyone here thought about the idea first. Corey said it sounds good to him. Larry asked if they know where they would be starting on the trails and where they would end. Kate said it would probably depend on how many people are available to work on it. She said in the past they have cleaned up by the boat launch as well as trails by Coburn Woods and Wesserunsett Preserve. She also said maybe they could clean up the tv and trash by Whitten Brook.

### **3) NEW BUSINESS:**

### **4) UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES:**

None

### **6) ADDITIONAL MEMBER & STAFF ITEMS:**

Tristen said that the past Conservation Commission member that started the beehive project at the high school will no longer be working at the high school after the end of the school year. Since the Conservation Commission sponsored the first 2 hives in this program, she wanted to know how everyone felt about what should happen with the beehives now. She didn't know if they want to wait and see who will be replacing this teacher and if they have any interest in tending the hives or if any other members have any interest in it. Barry asked if Tristen has enough knowledge to continue with the hives. She said she does and she actually has 2 of her own that are there. She said she feels like the original hives they sponsored should still be maintained and then if the high school wants to sell off the other hives that have been split off from them it would be fine. Corey said he would be happy to go up and help maintain them until the new teacher is in place. Kate said just to recap how the hives came about, the Conservation Commission was asked to sponsor this project at the high school by the Ecoteam there. The honey that was produced was sold by the Ecoteam as a fundraiser. Kate said that one thing that Kevin had discussed with her is selling all of the hives and putting the money towards the Ecoteam's future projects. Tristen said she felt that one of the selling points for the Conservation Commission to sponsor the project was to add that educational aspect at the high school for the students to experience and she would hate to see that go away completely. She said there are 10 hives now and most of them will probably end up being split

again this year. So if they could still keep the original hives and sell the rest that would still allow for fundraising for the Ecoteam as well as keeping that educational piece at the school. Kate said the other thing that her and Kevin had talked about is that it's unfortunate to put all that work in to a great project and then let it go but on the other hand when the person that has the passion for this project is leaving then they have to decide how to move forward. Another option they had talked about is maybe partnering with a local beekeeper to help maintain the hives and be able to keep them at the school. Tristen said she is more then willing to help maintain the hives and Dylan has said he can help as well. Tristen said this will need some further discussion.

Motion by Kate Drummond to adjourn at 6:50 pm. Seconded by Tristen Hinkle. Motion passed 5-0.  
Next meeting scheduled for May 3, 2022

Minutes approved \_\_\_\_\_, 2022

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Chairman

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