

## **Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC) Minutes**

June 10, 2021

6:00 pm

Location: Outside at the Rec Club pavilion near the Hub or thereabouts

Members Present: Carolyn Dash, Chair (CD), Kristen Underwood, Vice Chair (KU), Zelie Smith (ZS), Alex Smith (AS), Jono Chapin (JC), Dave Rosen (DR)

Members of the Public: Alex Mihavics (AM),; Porter Knight (PK), Jenny Sogin (JS)

### **I Call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03.

### **II Public Comment Period**

None

### **III Addition of Items to the Agenda**

CD added :

- open meeting laws
- scout projects
- 2020-2021 budget
- future meetings

### **IV Review and approval of minutes from May 13**

The motion to approve the minutes was put forward by KU and seconded by AS.

### **V Correspondence**

None

### **VI Old Business**

#### **A. Conservation Commission Membership:**

- a. CD reported that the BCC received a membership request from Serena Fox. She is a Lincoln resident though will be residing in Bristol for 10 months in the near future. It was suggested that she become a "Friend" of the BCC and attend meetings as such since nonresidents are not able to be official members.

#### **B. Bristol Trail Network (BTN)**

- a. The BCC meeting was joined via zoom by this summer's BTN intern. Jenny Sogin is a UVM student. BTN requests that interns spend about half of their time working on the trails and half of the time on a project of their choice in the parks or community that will be a lasting benefit for Bristol. Jenny Sogin has chosen to make at least two pollinator gardens in Bristol's parks. In the coming week Jenny will tour Bristol's parks and determine the appropriate locations. Sogin will then purchase all of the plants from local nurseries. Once the gardens are established - both by Sogin and volunteer groups- Sogin will develop an educational aspect. The idea is to put signs at the pollinator gardens with information about the

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plants, gardens, and the pollinators they attract and assist. Sogin will establish volunteer groups to maintain these gardens in the future.

Along with the pollinator project Sogin will continue the story walk project. This project is in collaboration with Lawrence Memorial Library. Every other week a new book will be chosen, the pages laminated and put up along the BTN. These will be on children-friendly trail sections with the option of putting a book for older children up on the river bend section of the network.

- b. PK reported other BTN updates: BTN is in discussions with landowners in various locations to extend the BTN. These locations include South Street, Plank Road, and around the old dump.

### C. Parks Updates:

- a. Eagle park and the Universal Fishing Platform: AM reported that the park and garden are looking good so far this summer. There are clear signs of use. Unfortunately some of this use is resulting in fire pits and some litter in and out of firepits. AM intends to post on Front Porch Forum encouraging use and discouraging fires and litter.
  - i. KU reported that there are no major reports on the Universal Fishing Platform rebuild because the engineer is working to get dock doctors down to look at it.
- b. Memorial park: AM reported that someone is defecating and leaving litter near the entrance of the park. There is a sign up already prohibiting litter but it does not seem to be discouraging the person who is consistently leaving litter.
  - i. AM also reported that the fence between the trail and the water will need to be replaced in the next couple of years.
- c. Sycamore park: portapotty is in place for the season and will remain until labor day. There is a bird house falling, which can be replaced by one of the bird houses the BCC has from the Edith Stock Trust. The BCC will set up a workday at Sycamore- the time of the workday will be determined via email. There has been no word about gravel for the parking area
- d. Town Green: The tree warden is going to trim a few trees in the park that have dead limbs

### D. Emerald Ash Borer Strategic Planning Committee:

- a. AM reported that the committee is in the process of trying to get the grant submitted. In the meantime all the leaves are out on the trees so they are able to see the health of the trees more clearly. There are a handful of ash trees in downtown Bristol that are infected. A couple of the trees are on the town green.

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One is thinning at the top and it will need further inspection to determine if it is infected or if this is normal thinning.

- i. At this time of year it is not advised to remove infected trees. This is EAB flight season, which means they are more likely to move to other trees if their tree is cut down between June and September. However, trees that pose a safety risk will have to be removed.
- ii. A map of the ash trees is being developed by the regional planning commission.

### **E. Illegal Dumping Sites:**

- a. AS reported that he spoke to Sergeant Michael Elmore about the dumping sites. Elmore thought that it was a good idea to put signs up at Bristol Pond and told AS that Fish and Wildlife will have to approve the signs before they are put in place.
- b. AS also reached out to the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers group to talk about cleaning up the Bristol Pond access area. They are now in the process of planning a clean up day.
- c. DR suggested that in order to solve the illegal dumping problem people would need to be compensated for bringing their trash to the landfill.

### **F. Website:**

- a. AM created an Explore Bristol Document that is a guide to activities, sites and recreation areas throughout not only the town of Bristol but the surrounding area as well. The BCC will add this to our website

### **G. Edith Stock Trust-**

- a. A birdhouse from the trust will be put up at sycamore park to replace the one that is currently falling down. AS to obtain cedar posts.

### **H. Town Plan 2020:** comments sent to PC; report on task progress this month

- a. The planning committee has not responded about our comments.
- b. CD talked to two Middlebury College professors Alexis Mychajliw and Diane Munroe both of whom are interested in collaborating with the BCC for student projects. The three current thoughts discussed are:
  - i. develop a management plan to minimize the introduction of invasive species into Bristol's natural communities on town properties.
  - ii. develop education and outreach materials for landowners about rare/threatened/endangered species.
  - iii. develop individual management plans for town parks.

The thought is that the environmental science students will pick a project that Mychajliw and her students will work on it for the next three to five years.

### **I. Memorial Park Management Plan discussion-**

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- a. The BCC divided up tasks to start work on the Management plan.
  - i. KU: Geology and History
  - AM: Current Issues
  - HY: Invasive Species
  - ZS: Current use
  - AS: Passive Open Space

### **VII New Business**

- a. Open Meeting Law
  - i. The BCC is now back in person and reviewed the open meeting law to understand what is needed to be in compliance with it. This law states that as a public body the BCC must keep all meetings open to the public. This means that meetings or other BCC business may not be decided via group emails.
  - ii. Neat TV will join with a handheld camera at future meetings.
- b. Scout Meetings
  - i. Bill Mount approached CD about projects for scout members. The scouts have worked in collaboration with the BCC on projects and clean up in the past.
  - ii. The BCC discussed various projects that might be age appropriate such as changing the birdhouses or helping the BTN intern, Jenny Sogin, with her pollinator gardens.
- c. 2020-2021 Budget
  - i. The BCC has \$200 left in the budget to use by June 30th. The BCC will allocate these funds to the BTN network for their intern, Jenny Sogin, to use to buy plants from local nurseries for the park pollinator gardens. The funds are to be used by Sogin by June 30th.
- d. Location for Future Meetings
  - i. The conference room in Holley Hall is still not available due to the pandemic. The BCC will meet in the same outdoor location by the Hub for the meeting on July 8th and perhaps the following months during the summer. This will be decided on a month by month basis until able to return to Holley Hall.

### **VIII Events**

- a. none

### **IX Next Meeting: July 8, 2020**

- a. Jenny Sogin will join this meeting

### **X Adjournment**

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31, KU motioned, AS seconded.