

Bristol Conservation Commission (BCC)

Minutes

Jan 12, 2023

6:00 pm

Location: Holley Hall conference room, zoom option*

Members Present: Carolyn Dash, Chair, (CD), Kristen Underwood, Vice Chair, (VC), Alex Smith (AS), Zelig Smith (ZS), Helen Young (HY), Nancy Morrison (NM), Jono Chapin (JC)

Members of the Public: Meridith McFarland, Freddie Cannon, Lauren Gemery, Jim Quaglino

I Call to order: 6:00 pm at Holley Hall

The January 12, 2023 meeting of the BCC was called to order at 6:03 PM

II Public Comment Period

None

III Addition of Items to the Agenda

None

IV Review and approval of minutes from Dec 8 meeting

ZS made a motion to approve the minutes from the Dec 8, 2022 BCC meeting. AS seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

V Correspondence

Only one- see section VI E for details

VI Old Business

A. Conservation Commission Membership- 2 open seats for Bristol residents

- a. The BCC still has two open seats. So far no one has responded to the front porch forum posts. The BCC will continue to post and hope that someone responds. The BCC will also spread the word around green up day.

B. Updating wildlife maps

- a. Proposed Middlebury College collaboration
 - i. Middlebury College professor, Dr. Alexis Mychajliw, decided to create a senior seminar course dedicated to the BCC's project to update the wildlife maps around Bristol. This course will take place spring 2024. In the meantime one of Mychajliw's students Lauren Gemery will lay some of the groundwork for that class by looking into the work that has been done and what the first steps will need to be for that class. She will also look into what other towns have done in recent years when updating their own wildlife maps.
 - ii. discussion of preliminary project scope and planning with Middlebury Spring 2023 research student
 1. The BCC discussed hiring Sophie Mazowita to do some of the first work to send the spring 2023 student in the right research direction.
- b. open discussion
 - i. According to the punch list that Sophie Mazowita gave to the BCC after meeting about this in September, the BCC budget would cover up to 5

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hours of preliminary work from Mazowita (up to \$225). The BCC will reach out to her and check her availability.

- ii. As made a motion to contact Sophie Mazowita and offer to pay her up to \$225 for preliminary information gathering to get Lauren Gemery started. KU seconded the vote and the motion was approved.
 1. This will depend on Sophie Mazowita's availability in the next couple of months. Lauren Gemery will start the project in mid February so this would only make sense if it happened before Gemery started or shortly after.

C. Parks Updates: Eagle, Memorial, Sycamore, Saunders River Access-

- a. Eagle: FC reported that the recent wind storm brought branches and sticks down. FC will pick up the stick and branches in the next couple weeks and remove them either off location or into existing wooded areas if available.
- b. Sycamore: FC is talking to the sheriff's department about putting game cameras up at that park because of an increase in illegal dumping. FC would like to see cameras go up at all of the parks because the dumping has significantly increased recently.
 - i. Freddie will talk to Bristol police about increasing security and enforcing no loitering after dark.
- c. The BCC suggested contacting the boy scouts for stick clearing. The boy scouts helped after a previous wind storm.
- d. Memorial park: the sign blew down, it has been removed from the property and will be replaced by the Rec Dept.

D. Mowing: discussion of "No Mow May" and possibilities for publicizing and town park(s) with Rec Dept

- a. BCC members are proposing participating in "no mow may" in the parks around bristol. The Rec Dept said that memorial park could easily participate because there is only a small area that is mowed and it is mowed by the Rec Dept itself. Sycamore park would be trickier because there is a right of way. The Rec dept suggested that sections could be left in May. However, the landscaping company who is contracted by the town may charge more in June for the longer grass and may need to mow twice to get the grass down. This would leave grass clippings which would need to be picked up by volunteers. The Rec Dept will talk to the town offices about discussing a contract change with the landscaping company to include possible no-mow-may areas of sycamore park.
- b. A discussion followed about maintaining the park in a more natural way. The town plan will need to be checked to see if there was ever a requirement about the management of the park. There would also need to be a plan to manage the knotweed. This would require rethinking the way the park was operated and used and will be discussed further at another time after seeing how no-mow-may goes.

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- c. A discussion followed that discussion about promoting no-mow-may townwide and ways to get the word out. Perhaps put up flyers along with green up day flyers and look into lawn signs for those participating.

E. Increasing park accessibility:

- a. Porter Knight wrote to the commission that she's working on making Bristol a recreational destination for families where outdoor recreation is available to all people of all mobility. Knight is putting together ideas about ways to make parks more accessible and looking into funding. This was just an update for the BCC to keep the commission aware of her plans.

F. BCC webpage:

- a. The annual report has been submitted and is now up on the website.

G. Green Up Day: May 6, 2023 brainstorm

- a. The commission discussed reintroducing the green up day expo which only took place once before the pandemic. Members of the BCC will reach out to Bristol Core, the Energy Committee, and the High School Environmental group, all of whom participated last time, to see if there is any interest.

VIII Events

Green Up Day is May 6th

IX Next Meeting: February 9, 2023, Holley Hall/zoom option

X Adjournment

AS made a motion to adjourn the meeting. ZS seconded. The motion passed and the January meeting of the BCC was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

A recording of the entire meeting is available at <http://bristolvt.org/fy-2022-2023-meetings/>