

MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Thursday March 30, 2023 7PM
Charlestown Town Hall Council Chambers

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - Lynn Macalister called the meeting to order at 7:06pm
- II. **ROLL CALL** - Present - Anthony Feisthamel; Shirley Griffin; Silvermoon LaRose, Charles Connery, Lynn Macalister; Excused – Richard (Rick) Melvin; Nicolas (Nick) Testa
- III. **INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS** - none
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR March 2, 2023** - Do not have a quorum of commissioners who were present at the March 2 meeting to approve, approval to be postponed to next month.
- V. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - 1) Discussion and actions regarding management and maintenance of:
 1. Arnold Family White Cedar Swamp Preserve - no updates
 2. Charlestown Moraine Preserve - light trimming needed at Moraine, not too much maintenance needed so the commission can handle this without hosting a community day
 3. Patricia Sprague Forest Preserve - requested estimate from Larlham for summer mowing, awaiting response; request was to mow every 3 weeks from May to September; tree down, Larlham removed for \$275; Need to set date for river trail clearing to improve access, will require community support; **Cleanup date scheduled for May 7, 9:30am-11:00am**; Lisa Tewksbury from URI will be taking her students to visit the property to release Hypena Opulent moths in this area (for managing black swallow wort).
 4. Richard Trails Preserve - tree down on pink section, Larlham removed for \$275
 5. Schoolhouse Pond Preserve - Some brush removal needed; motorized dirt bikes have been using an area that needs to be blocked, date scheduled for Lynn and Charlie to address; Individual camping at the site, this was removed, police were notified. Trail cam could be used to monitor the beach area to cut down on improper use of the location. Will research options for trail cameras and revisit.
 6. South Farm Preserve - **Charlie made a motion to approve funds to cover mowing (4ft wide paths) every three weeks from May to September in the amount of \$500 per cutting (estimate #6444). Anthony seconded. Motion passed unanimously.** DPW is mowing the whole field one time this year when the swallow wart is flowering to manage the invasive, in August. Will continue to investigate the option of a controlled burn. Lisa Tewksbury from URI is continuing monitoring, she does not believe a burn will help because the swallow wort is in the woods. Possible to do a comparison, an area that is burned vs. an area that is not to test effectiveness.

Picnic table was removed by DPW as it was falling apart; one picnic table remaining on the property.

7. Tucker Woods Preserve - Lynn to address concerns about the geo cache on this trail. A neighbor reported concerns that there are now spots of erosion on the yellow trail that was not there before and roots that are being exposed, perhaps too much mowing of the woods trail, will investigate and cut back on mowing or raise blades to see if that improves. Discussed extending blue trail at Tucker to complete the loop. **Charlie motion to approve \$2,999 to support removal of downed deadfall trees across the proposed trail at Tucker Preserve. Anthony seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.** Also need to address parking area next month.

VI. ADDITIONAL OLD BUSINESS for discussion and possible actions

- 1) Spring Preserve cleanup dates - **Community Cleanup at Sprague date scheduled for May 7, 9:30am-11:00am.** Additional dates set for commissioners to address Moraine and School House in pairs.
- 2) Take a Book on a Hike - Lynn Macalister purchased the prizes for the challenge. Silvermoon created the flyer. It has been sent to the Cross Mills Library; shared with Vicky Hilton who said she'd share it; shared with Charlestown Elementary school who said they'd add to the school newsletter; Sent to Chariho Middle school and the superintendent. We can make copies and give them to Charlestown Elementary and they will send home with the children if it is approved by Gina Picard for sharing. **Charlie made a motion to approve up to \$75 to purchase color copies (white if it goes above budget) to give to the school to distribute to students. Anthony seconded the motion. Motion was approved.**
- 3) Land and Water Summit - **Shirley made a motion to spend \$60.54 for Lynn to attend the land and water summit on behalf of the ccc. Charlie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**
- 4) Earth Day Celebration/Deerfoot 5K - At least 2 volunteers needed to cover table, Shirley and Lynn willing to go, Rick has expressed interest last meeting, others can attend if they are free and willing.
- 5) Spotted Fly presentation - Collaborating with Cynthia Kwolek (DEM) and Amy Forbes (Cross Mills Library) to identify a potential date to hold the presentation; will follow up and let everyone know what works best for them.
- 6) 2022-23 Budget - \$220 remains in the 740-5020; approx \$12,000 remains in the 620-6065.
- 7) 2023-24 Budget - \$23000 was proposed for 620-6065, \$4285 was proposed for 740-5020; this will go to the town budget meeting for a vote.

VII. NEW BUSINESS for discussion and possible actions

- 1) Updated 2022 Charlestown Open Space Monitoring - Shirley made a motion to approve the changes to the Annual Monitoring of Selected Town Owned Open Spaces to be submitted to the town council. Anthony seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- 2) RI Ethics paperwork - all CCC members need to submit
- 3) Other -
 - a) Add liaison to the agenda to be recognized after the approval of minutes for all future meetings.
 - b) Rick has volunteered to take on the responsibility of visiting all of the preserves once a month for a check and maintenance.
 - c) Intern - successful completion of most of the proposed projects. Was not able to complete updating the trail maps, ran out of hours. Lynn will follow up with proposed options. Did not change anything on the website as we need to determine what changes we want. Group agrees to have our names; use a collective email address, charlestownconservation@gmail.com; add a photo of us as a group (to be taken at the community cleanup day); have mail go to the town hall attn: Charlestown Conservation Commission and ask for a mailbox here that we can use for those who would prefer snail mail to email; no phone number contact.

VIII. MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS - none

- IX. ADJOURNMENT** - Shirley made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Silvermoon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm

*Respectfully Submitted,
Silvermoon LaRose, Secretary Charlestown Conservation Commission*

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday April 27, 2023, 7:00pm Charlestown Town Hall Council Chambers

The public is welcome to any meeting of the Charlestown Conservation Commission. If communication assistance (readers/ interpreters/captions) is needed or any other accommodation to ensure equal participation, please contact 401-364-1210 at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.