

Agenda
Tolland Conservation Commission
Zoom Remote Meeting
Thursday, June 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Seating of Alternate(s)**
- 4. Public Comments**
- 5. Additions/Changes to Agenda**
- 6. New Business**
- 7. Old Business**
 - 7.1. Timber harvest activities
 - 7.2. Trail connection to Shafran
 - 7.3. Bodner Property
- 8. Reports from Head Steward and Subcommittees**
 - 8.1. Conservation Corp (Ryan McCann)
 - 8.2. Management Plans (Gene)
 - 8.3. Communication and Education (Jane)
 - 8.4. Property Boundaries and Trail Mapping (Adam)
 - 8.5. Town Owned Property Evaluations (Gene)
 - 8.6. Wanat Property Design Implementation (Peggy, Jane)
 - 8.7. Grant Writing and Fund Raising
- 9. Reports/Information from Other Organizations**
- 10. Staff Updates (David Corcoran)**
- 11. Items for Next Meeting**
- 12. Announcements**
- 13. Approve Minutes – May 9, 2024 Regular Meeting**
- 14. Adjournment**

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Meeting ID: 432 540 2030

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Tolland Conservation Commission (TCC)

Meeting minutes

09 May 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual meeting via Zoom

1. **Call to order** 7:03 p.m.

2. **Roll call**

TCC Members: J. Simao (Chairman), S. McKown, E. Koss, L. A. Swan, K. Ackerman

Public: D. Corcoran, R. McCann

3. **Seating of Alternate(s)**

None needed.

4. **Public Comments**

There were none.

5. **Additions/Changes to Agenda**

There were none.

6. **New Business**

6.1. Trail Connection to Shafran

B. Rubino and J. Simao have not heard from Clare Cain (Trails Director, CT Forest and Park Association) thus we will table this subject for another month.

6.2 Discussion on Parciak Timber Harvest

J. Simao stated that a group of commissioners met with the state foresters to have an informal walk of the Parciak property. The foresters explained what was done during the timber harvest at the site and why. All TCC members present were impressed by the forester's knowledge and planning of the activity. They were very attentive to what the commissioners had to say. S. McKown stated that maybe for the next timber harvest the work can be done farther away from the trail to help preserve the ascetics of the forests for hikers. E. Koss stated the timber harvest was needed to improve the area and health of the forest.

6.3 Plant Purchase for Parciak

Discussion will be tabled until B. Rubino is present.

6.4 Community Campout

J. Simao reported on a meeting she attended concerning the planning of a Tolland Community Campout. This is tentatively scheduled for a weekend in September or October. It will be held at Tolland Middle School. A lot of activities are being planned. The TCC was asked if they are interested in holding a 1-hour event (e.g. hike, nature scavenger hunt) during the campout. All agreed the TCC should participate.

7. **Old business**

7.1 Next Property for Timber Harvest

A discussion was held on the next steps for timber harvesting.

- D. Corcoran stated that there is \$15,000 available in ARPA money to fund the activity. The TCC could choose to execute another timber harvest or update stewardship plans. \$7,000 to \$8000 is the cost of a plan update.
- It was decided to slow the timber harvest to later in the year and update the stewardship plans. This will allow the residents/hikers time to feel comfortable with the results of the Parciak timber harvest as well as give the TCC Corp more time to fill ruts and make habitats for animals from the slash/brush.
- R. McCann stated that the signs for Parciak Conservation Area (Boy Scout Eagle project) are \$385 apiece. Four signs are needed to explain the timber harvest results and benefits. The Boy Scouts will raise funds for one sign but was looking for help to fund the other three. There was a discussion

on whether the ARPA monies could be used for the sign. D. Corcoran will ask the finance department and report back.

- A motion was made by E. Koss, 2nd by S. McKown to use the ARPA funds to pay for two stewardship plans and three signs (if allowed) for the Eagle project. One stewardship plan will be a comprehensive plan for the Palmer area and Crystal Peat area. The other stewardship plan will be for the Schindler-Schmidt area.

7.2 Pollinator Pathway Update

J. Simao reported that she attended an organizational meeting on the Pollinator Pathways.

- A pollinator pathway is property that has native plants, invasive plants removed, does not use insecticide or provides connectivity/wildlife corridor.
- All Tolland Conservation Areas have these qualities and can be on the Pollinator Pathway map.
- A website is being built and the TCC will be supporting.

7.3 Bigfoot Hiking Series

J. Simao presented ideas for the Bigfoot/Unicorn hiking series.

- The hiking series will be held in June, July and August (depending on participation) and consist of a TCC Scavenger Hunt each month at a different conservation area.
- TCC Scavenger Hunt will consist of finding signs, taking selfies with signs and sending selfies through email to TCC. D. Corcoran stated we could use the email conservation@tolland.ct.gov.
- If a hiker finds all signs, they will be entered into a raffle to be drawn at the end of the month.
- The idea was well received.
- K. Ackerman suggested putting the raffle dates on the Bigfoot Hiking Series poster.

8. Reports from Head Steward and Subcommittees

8.1 Conservation Corp

- S. McKown stated that there were a few trees down on the trail at Crystal Peak conservation area.
- R. McCann reported that the spreading of stones at Parciak is done. The remaining stones will be used at Wanat for the silo path.
- Next trail day will be at Parciak.
- The Corp took delivery of ATV last week. \$8500 was received from Tolland Greater Together funds to purchase a trailer to tow the ATV.
- The Schindler-Schmidt family has permission to harvest firewood from the Schindler-Schmidt conservation area. The property was torn up during the recent harvest. The family needs to be approached to make them aware of the problem. D. Corcoran and his office will research the agreement that allows the family to harvest timber. He will get back to the TCC.
- L.A. Swan stated that a trail day with the cub scouts is being planned. Current dates being considered are 5/17, 5/19, or 6/2. R. McCann stated he will get back to L.A. Swan shortly on which date will work best.

8.2. Management Plans

E. Koss stated that the management plan for Paulk Hill will be updated to address the erosion problems. He will send the revised plan to the commissioners when ready.

8.3. Communication and Education

R. McCann and J. Simao will be holding two 6th grade field trips. They will be 5/20 and 5/23 and help is needed. S. McKown and L.A. Swan both stated they will be available to help.

8.4. Property Boundaries and Trail Mapping

None.

8.5. Town Owned Property Evaluations

E. Koss stated that he did some research on the request from the Senior Center to provide connectivity from Paulk Hill to the Center. More research needs to be done and he will talk to the Senior hiking group about their expectations.

8.6. Wanat Property Design Implementation

None.

8.7. Grant Writing and Fundraising

None.

9. Reports and information from Other Organizations

None.

10. Staff Updates

D. Corcoran stated that the Land Acquisition Committee will be going to the Council on 6/11 to request an appraisal of the Bodner area. There also appears to be some movement on the Tolland Marsh property.

11. Items for Next Meeting

Update on timber harvest activities, trail connection to Shafran.

12. Announcements

There were none.

13. Approve Previous Minutes

A motion was made by E. Koss, 2nd by L. Swan to accept the minutes of the 11 April 2024 meeting. The motion was passed, four in favor and K. Ackerman abstained (she was not at last month's meeting).

14. Adjournment

A motion was made by E. Koss, 2nd by S. McKown to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Swan

Secretary, Tolland Conservation Commission