

BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting utilizing Zoom

Members Present: Chairman Rod Parlee, Alan Bicknell, Brenda Cataldo (joined the meeting at 7:15 p.m.), Peter Van Dine and Matt Rivers

Special Guest: Meghan Seremet, Connecticut State Geologist and Chairperson of the Connecticut Geographic Names Authority

1.0 Call Meeting to Order – Roll Call

Chairman R. Parlee called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2.0 Minutes Review of August 7, 2023, Regular Meeting

A. Bicknell made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. M. Rivers seconded. The motion passed 3:0:1. P. Van Dine abstained.

3.0 Public Comment: None

4.0 Financial Report

P. Van Dine shared the reconciled FY 2023 Financial Report and 2024 Financial Report online.

R. Parlee made a motion to approve the Treasurers Financial Reports noting the error in the balance of the Conservation Activity Fund in the 2024 report. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

4.1 Notch Pond Water Analysis Payment to Phoenix Environmental Laboratories

Payment was made in June 2023.

4.1 CACIWC Co-Membership Renewal

M. Rivers made a motion to appropriate \$75.00 out of the Dues & Fees Account for sustaining co-membership to CACIWC with the Inland Wetlands Commission. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Open Submissions to the 23rd Annual Town-wide Photo Contest

A. Bicknell made a motion to open the window for photo submissions to the BCC 23rd Annual Town-Wide Photo Contest. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

R. Parlee suggested reformatting the contest flyer to a style similar to that of the Hop River Trail Alliance. He had forwarded a screenshot of their flyer to the BCC members. B. Cataldo also agreed to use larger text in the reformatted flyer. Some of the rules were reviewed including: no

hard copy photos, landscape photos are best and submissions must include a photo title along with the name and address of the photographer. The statement: “Prizes will not be delivered to winner’s homes” was omitted. BCC members can not submit photos to the contest although member’s photos can be used for the calendar. The contest deadline is May 6, 2024.

5.2 Plan 2024 Calendar with Production Timeframe Metrics

R. Parlee noted that the calendars should be printed and ready before Thanksgiving. November 15, 2023 was suggested as a printing deadline. B. Cataldo agreed and the commission agreed by consensus.

Soliciting for advertisers can begin any time now. Advertising venues were suggested and B. Cataldo will have the advertising forms available next week. The photo contest flyer and the donation form will be included in each calendar.

5.3 Approve BCC Meeting Dates and Events for 2024

The following BCC meeting dates are proposed for 2024:

Thursday, January 4, 2024

Monday, February 5, 2024

Monday, March 4, 2024

Monday, April 1, 2024

Monday, May 6, 2024

Monday, June 3, 2024

Monday, July 1, 2024

Monday, August 5, 2024

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Monday, October 7, 2024

Thursday, November 7, 2024

Monday, December 2, 2024

Meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, virtual via Zoom or hybrid.

A. Bicknell made a motion to accept the meeting dates as proposed. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

R. Parlee also shared BCC event days, holidays, and other events as listed below.

BCC Calendar Event Dates for 2024

BLWCA Alliance Meeting (every 2nd Wednesday)

Friends of Bolton Lakes (FBL) Meeting (every 3rd Wednesday)

Bolton Planning & Zoning Commission (P & Z) Meeting (every 2nd Wednesday)

Bolton Inland Wetlands Commission (IWC) Meeting (every 4th Tuesday)

Winter Trails Day 1/20/2024
Vernal Pool Conservation Day 3/23/2024
Earth Day Celebration 4/20/2024
Photo Contest Entry Deadline 5/6/2024
Scrap Metal Pickup Week Starting 5/13/2024
Kids to Parks Day 5/18/2024
Bolton Sailing Regatta 5/19/2024
Trails Day 6/1/2024
Scrap Metal Pickup Week Starting 10/7/2024
Reenactment at Heritage Farm October 7th and 8th? B. Cataldo will check with Arlene Fiano
Peak Foliage Hike 10/19/2024
21st Annual RBV 10/27/2024
Winter Faire 12/7/2024

M. Rivers made a motion to accept the above event dates. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

B. Cataldo suggested scheduling work parties the week before planned hike events and everyone agreed. M. Rivers will forward R. Parlee a list of people who expressed interest in the BCC. R. Parlee suggested starting a “Friends of the Conservation Commission” group. They would be contacted to see if they would be interested in participating in a work party.

5.4 Consider Name Change for BNSP Historic Cave

Meghan Seremet, State Geologist spoke regarding the proposed name change. Anyone can apply to rename a feature in Connecticut or any other state. The application to rename the BNSP Historic Cave was sent to the Connecticut Geographic Naming Authority. The previous name of the cave is the federally recognized name Squaw Cave. A geographic feature cannot be named for a living person. The application requests a name change to Wunnee-Neetunah Cave. Meghan researched the name with the Bolton Historical Society. Federal GIS maps do not show caves. The cave could be added to the Bolton town map.

There is no Native American member on the Naming Authority. Ms. Seremet asked if there were any other name suggestions. R. Parlee thinks that renaming the cave is a good idea and if the current name is derogatory, the name should be changed. M. Rivers feels that the full name should be used. It speaks more of the intention of the name change and the initiative to do right by the cave and its prior occupants. A. Bicknell agrees. The BOS should agree as well. P. Van Dine suggested including the phonetic pronunciation of the name.

A. Bicknell asked if there would be some sort of placard at the cave. It is an Algonquin name and he would like to include some of the history of the cave. There is more to the area than the cave. Perhaps the name change should include the entire archeological area. Ms. Seremet asked if the whole area is in BNSP.

A. Bicknell is concerned with the seep well. The well seems to have been made very precisely and cleanly as opposed to the sheep enclosure near the well. The well is now under a protective cover but people have been vandalizing the top edge of the well so it now has no integrity. Alan showed a current picture of the well.

P. Van Dine asked if people would want the entire park changed to Wunnee-Neetunah Park. R. Parlee spoke with Ray Hardy about having the cave put aside as a natural landmark. The BOS was okay with that, but caves are not included in the historical landmark language. Renaming a State Park would be more difficult. Ms. Seremet stated that would be under the auspices of the CT DEEP. No one on the commission is opposed to the renaming of the cave. P. Van Dine suggested using Judges Cave in New Haven as an example.

P. Van Dine made a motion stating that the BCC agrees with the renaming of the cave in the BNSP as Wunnee-Neetunah Cave. M. Rivers seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0. The vote results will be forwarded to the BOS, Ms. Seremet and the Connecticut Geographic Naming Authority.

Ms Seremet has also looked into the name of Notch Pond. Lately the name is trending to Bolton Notch Pond. A. Bicknell said that the Algonquin name of the area is Saqumsketuck (the pond at the high rocks).

Rod shared a photo online of Ray Hardy in front of the cave as well as a photo of Ms. Seremet standing in front of the cave. The comparison showed the possibility of change at the entrance.

Ms. Seremet shared the following links with the BCC.

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/search/names>

<https://www.usgs.gov/us-board-on-geographic-names/guidance-name-proposals#4>

Rod thanked Meghan for her participation in the meeting and for her tenacity in looking for the cave. There was a lot of vegetative growth covering the area making the trailhead hard to find. R. Parlee proposed adding signage and a blazed trail.

5.5 Meeting on September 18th with Madelyn Hart of All American Waste

Bolton's status with Sustainable CT is up for recertification. The meeting with All American Waste will be held at Town Hall at 10:00 a.m. Recycle CT is an app that B. Cataldo has on her phone. The app disagrees with the Bolton "What's In and What's Out" literature. A. Bicknell noted that there should be clarification of what is really recyclable. We should all be on the same page. A laminated flyer showing recyclable items on the cover of recycling bins would be helpful.

6.0 Continuing Business

6.1 BHS Student Volunteer Opportunities with Jennifer Carvalho

Ms. Carvalho heads up the science class at Bolton High School. R. Parlee is awaiting a response to his June and September letters asking for student volunteers. A. Bicknell noted that it is a

very hectic time in the school year and that Ms. Carvalho should be allowed more time to respond.

6.2 NRI –Mapping and GEO Photo Archive from Photo Contests

R. Parlee thinks that a Natural Resource Inventory is important. The BCC has many photos that have been submitted over the years that could be included as a layer on the map. A camera icon could be on a map. The icon would be clickable and would show the actual photo. A. Bicknell agrees that it is an interesting idea. This could be a Bolton High School student project “Friends of Conservation Commission” could be involved. R. Parlee has a flash drive of NRI inventories over the years.

6.3 September Stream Salamander Survey with Hank Gruner

R. Parlee is waiting to hear from Mr. Gruner about the final survey for 2023.

6.4 Schedule Meeting with Pam Sawyer and Jim Rupert re: POCD, etc.

R. Parlee reached out again today to try to schedule a meeting. Along with the topics mentioned below in correspondence, he would like to know what town funds are appropriated for the POCD. P. Van Dine will ask the Chairman of the P&Z about that.

6.5 Stream Temperature/Vernal Pool Monitoring Update & Equipment Inventory

R. Parlee thanked P. Van Dine for the three-year monitoring graph that he put together. P. Van Dine spoke about the variations over the three years. The same monitor was used for all of the testing. R. Parlee will send the graph to Hank Gruner and Ed Pawlak and ask them what their thoughts are. P. Van Dine will provide them more data if he can. R. Parlee noted that the largest variation that is seen on the graph was when the water was the deepest. A. Bicknell suggested that BCC members take and record observations while visiting the vernal pool i.e. day, time, rain events, height of water in the pool, etc.

P. Van Dine will organize the inventory in the next month. 18 devices have been used. 4 are lost or have been returned to the State. 8 monitors are in place and are active.

6.6 BLWCA, FBL, BLT, SRWP, CACIWC Reports

BLWCA (Bolton Lakes Watershed Conservation Alliance) –

Ryan Goad, Chairman of the Vernon Conservation Commission will be running the meeting to be held at the NCCD. The monitoring of the trash rack at Hatch Hill will be a point of discussion. The debris is blocking the exit over the top of the dam.

Jane and Ken Peacock led a kayak flotilla to Upper Bolton Lake today along with a UCONN Professor of Natural Resources and many students. They plan to determine where to install a water level indicator. This is particularly important for the Atlantic White Cedar.

CT DEEP updated their drawdown policy from 1998 but it is not significantly different. The BLWCA bylaws have been approved and updated.

An osprey nesting platform may be in the works.

FBL (Friends of Bolton Lake) –

P. Van Dine said that when they applied herbicide in Middle Lake for the milfoil, the notices were not done properly. Hydrilla was also spotted recently.

BLT (Bolton Land Trust) –

R. Parlee noted that a breeding bird survey was done downhill from Heritage Farm (the Edith Toomey Clark Property) and a study on beavers was done near the Bolton Land Trust's Blackledge River property.

SRWP (Salmon River Watershed Partnership) –

P. Van Dine will get together with M. Rivers to discuss the memo of planned cooperation of the BCC with SRWP. P. Van Dine wants to be in a position to be part of the SRWP monitoring system. M. Rivers should discuss this with Pat Young.

R. Parlee asked M. Rivers to send the SRWP annual report to all BCC members so that they can look for details that might answer questions in the memo.

CACIWC (Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions –

The BCC is now a sustaining co-member with the Inlands Wetlands Commission. BCC members should decide who will attend the annual meeting on November 11, 2023.

6.7 20th Annual RBV on 10/29 and Peak Foliage Hike on 10/21

The RBV will be held at Herrick Park Lodge as it was last year. R. Parlee will look into booking the venue.

Alan and Rod will co-lead the Peak Foliage Hike.

7.0 Correspondence

Email response from Madelyn Hart from All American Waste confirming a meeting to take place on September 18, 2023. The topic of the meeting will be recycling and compost goals for the Town of Bolton.

Letter from R. Parlee to Jennifer Carvalho at Bolton High School asking for student volunteers for BCC activities.

Bolton Notch Vernal Pool temperature chart

Email from R. Parlee to Jim Rupert and Pam Sawyer requesting a meeting to talk about the following subjects:

- 1) Mapping GIS Meta Data and NRI
- 2) Nathan Hale Greenway
- 3) BHS Student Rep and Alternate Opening
- 4) Communication Follow Up, i.e., Invitation to FEMA Risk Map Project and Culverts with Litter and Beavers in Notch Pond

8.0 Approval of Clerk's Invoice

M. Rivers made a motion to accept the clerk's invoice as presented. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

9.0 Adjournment

A. Bicknell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. and may be held at the Bolton Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by Leslie Brand,

Leslie J. Brand

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for corrections to these minutes and any corrections hereto.

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Financial Action items

M. Rivers made a motion to appropriate \$75.00 out of the Dues & Fees Account for sustaining co-membership to CACIWC with the Inland Wetlands Commission. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:0.