

APPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

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Meeting October 31, 2022 at 7PM

Present: Roberta Barbieri James Coyle Jack Kace Erik Keller
Peter Nichols Matt Sharp Jim Liptack Kitsey Snow

Absent: Benjamin Nissim, Jean Linville, Allan Welby

Chairman Coyle called the meeting to order at 7 P.M.

Upon motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Liptack) to add Executive Session to the agenda under Enforcement Actions. Vote 8:0

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of October 17, 2022 be approved and ordered filed in Town Hall. Vote: 8:0

2. ENFORCEMENT ACTION (Executive Session to discuss potential litigation)

- 162 Old West Mountain Road

Upon motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Liptack), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission go into Executive Session Vote 8:0.

Returned to public meeting 7:30pm.

- 258 West Mountain Road

RCC will work with Andy Hally on the best path forward to remove the fence posts on RCC property.

Upon motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Sharp), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission spend up to \$900 on the removal of fencing on RCC property adjacent to 258 West Mountain Road. Vote 8:0

3. INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

3.1 Goats

Ms. Barbieri and Ms. Balch with Fat and Sassy Goats presented a proposal to tackle the invasives at McKeon Farm as a pilot project to demonstrate to the Town that invasives can be managed. One topic of discussion for RCC to consider would be to develop a broader plan to implement in partnership with the Town and propose a longer-term solution for invasives management. In addition, the RCC needs to understand the total overall budget commitment, as Ms. Balch mentioned it could take up to three years to eradicate invasives from one location. Ms. Barbieri indicated that their priority was to render McKeon Farm free of invasive plant species.

Mr. Coyle will add in the current capital budget proposal request (to be worked on with Ms. Barbieri and Ms. Snow) for up to \$10,000 for year over year invasive mitigation in the Fall and the Spring. He noted that it may be rejected out of hand as it may not be considered to be a capital expense item.

Upon motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission spend up to \$5,000 for a pilot goat invasive species removal program on Lauzen field at McKeon Farm as long as the current tenant, Henny Penny Farm is also in agreement. Vote 8:0

The RCC will coordinate a discussion with Henny Penny and Fat and Sassy Goats as well as inform the neighbors around McKeon prior to the start of this pilot program.

4. OPEN SPACE

4.1 Old West Mountain

Mr. Coyle gave an update on the 17-acre parcel that could possibly be for sale or interest from the town. Rudy Marconi will contact the property owner.

5. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Coyle proposed to skip this item for now and move to the following meeting.

6. CAPITAL and ANNUAL EXPENSE BUDGETS

The aforementioned capital budget request is due December 1. Any requests by commissioners for capital budget items must be supported by a rationale for the item and cost estimate. They should be submitted to the Chairman by November 28.

Mr. Coyle will prepare an annual expense budget with an increase of about 3 percent from current for submission to the Town for approval. It is due December 9.

7. NRI STORY BOARD

Mr. Coyle mentioned the maps are almost complete and will send around to the Board for review. The website related to the NRI story board needs to be created. The RCC is talking to PACE university; a student is willing to complete this project for \$2,500.

Motion was made (Nichols), seconded (Keller) to approve \$2,500 to complete the NRI Story Board. Vote 8:0

8. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Coyle mentioned the Annual Appeal letter will go out this month. Requests for donation will be mailed to around 10,000 commercial and residential addresses.

Motion was made (Keller), seconded (Nichols) to approve \$6,000 for the annual appeal letter mailing. Vote 8:0

Mr. Coyle met with Parks and Rec regarding the Invasive Policy. Parks and Rec will prepare a list of comments regarding the policy and how to proceed with the new Policy in regards to affecting the Parks and Rec day-to-day operations.

Ms. Snow is ready to seed 3,000 sq ft of the pollinator garden at McKeon. The wild flower mix would cost around \$400-\$500. She will provide a final budget number at the next meeting.

9. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

P&Z

November 09 - Snow

November 22 - Welby

IWB

November 10 – Keller

December 08 – Nichols

10. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

No remarks.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Liptack), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourned at 9:19 P.M. Vote: 8:0.