

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 9, 2016 7:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM B MADISON TOWN CAMPUS**

Subject to approval: Minutes of the Meeting of May 9, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. - Meeting Room B- Madison Town Campus

Members present: Chairman Heather Crawford, Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard, Richard Gedney, George McManus, Rachel Klein, and Alex Cushing.

Members absent: Clyde Burkhardt.

Additional attendees: Inland Wetlands Officer Robert Kuchta; L. Kealoha Freidenburg, Timothy Millhiser.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Chairman Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.
2. **Call for additional agenda items:** Chairman Crawford asked that a motion be made and vote be taken to add to the agenda a report from former Commissioner L. Kealoha Freidenburg.

Commissioner McManus made the motion to add items to the agenda; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to add items to the agenda passed, 6-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Gedney, McManus, Klein, and Cushing.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

3. **L. Kealoha Freidenburg's report on Salt Meadow Park:** L. Kealoha Freidenburg reported on the results of a site walk at Salt Meadow; there are questions about the mowing and the easement; in addition there appear to be permanent structures in the field. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson believes there should not be permanent structures in the field, Ms. Freidenburg stated. Sampling of the ponds has been taking place over the past two years, and Ms. Freidenburg reported that everyone is pleased to be finding a variety of native species, such as dragonfly larvae, toad tadpoles, and toads. She also reported horseshoe crabs are out, and there needs to be a reminder that beaches cannot be raked without a permit; this is regulated by the state. Chairman Crawford stated that the Salt Meadow Park advisory committee has to give permission before anything is installed, including fencing, and the Conservation Commission is concerned about the fencing. Commissioner McManus stated he thinks the fencing poles are temporary. In addition, mowing should not be taking place so close to or within the easement, according to Chairman Crawford.

Commissioner Gedney made the motion that Chairman Crawford write a letter expressing concerns about the mowing, the easement, beach raking, and permanent structures being placed apparently without permission; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to have Chairman Crawford write the letter passed, 6-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Gedney, McManus,

Page 1. Conservation Commission, May 9, 2016

Klein, and Cushing.
OPPOSED: None.
ABSTAINED: None.

4. **Thank retiring members and welcome new commission members:** Chairman Crawford reported that L. Kealoha Freidenburg is retiring from the Conservation Commission to serve on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency. Chairman Crawford asked everyone to introduce themselves to new commission members Alex Cushing and Rachel Klein. The Conservation Commission is now 10 years old, and both Chairman Crawford and former Vice Chairman Freidenburg have served on the panel since its inception. Chairman Crawford thanked everyone for their service, and she explained the role and responsibilities of the Conservation Commission to the new commissioners.

5. **Project/Issue Updates**

~ **Climate Change Presentation and URI Grad student Steven Koch:** Chairman Crawford has been continuing to make presentations on climate change, and work is under way with Steven Koch.

~ **Residential Lighting ~ Presentation Update:** Chairman Crawford stated that the commission has been working on light pollution, and there will be a presentation in July. There is a light pollution quiz Chairman Crawford will send to the commissioners; sky glow is also a problem for both the environment and humans. It has been found that the blue light is actually changing the way some of the trees are leafing out, she stated.

~ **Boundary documentation update:** Chairman Crawford stated that Commissioner Gedney continues his work on documenting boundary markers.

~ **Public Education/Outreach for 2016:** The Conservation Commission has a booth at the Bauer Park Festival and information on invasive plants is handed out to the public.

~ **Follow-up to Green-Up Clean-Up Day, April 23rd:** The event was successful and took place that Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

6. **Budget for 2015-2016:** Chairman Crawford stated that the first selectman has instituted a budget spending freeze.

7. **Minutes:** Review and approve minutes of April 11, 2016 meeting

Commissioner Gedney made the motion to accept the April 11, 2016 minutes, as submitted; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and approved.

Vote to accept the April 11, 2016 minutes as submitted passed, 5-0-1.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Gedney, Cushing, and Klein.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: Commissioner McManus.

8. **Adjournment**

Vice Chairman Bouchard made the motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.; it was seconded by Commissioner McManus and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn passed, 6-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard and Commissioners Gedney, McManus, Klein, and Cushing.

OPPOSED: None.
ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk