

Open Space Preservation Committee
Parks Advisory Committee
Tuesday May 15, 2018 7:00 PM
Mansfield Town Hall Conference Room B
Minutes – FINAL

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00

2. Roll Call

Attending: Jim Morrow (Chair), Vicky Wetherell, Ken Feathers (secretary), Michael Soares, Quentin Kessel, Tom Harrington, Sue Harrington

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Kaufman

3. Review of Minutes

The Minutes of April 17, 2018 regular meeting were approved with the addition of the submitting author (moved Soares, second, Morrow)

The minutes of the May 11, 2018 special meeting were approved (moved Soares, second, Morrow)

4. Opportunity for Public comment

No members of the public were present

5. New Business

- *Coordinating with other related committees*

Members discussed approaches for coordinating with related town committees, including Agriculture, Sustainability, and Conservation. Sustainable Mansfield was considered an appropriate umbrella concept to use for this discussion. Town Staff will schedule a meeting of committee chairs to begin this effort and, in addition, inform the new town manager and staff of committee's roles.

6. Continuing business

- *Open space preservation committee/parks advisory committee charge*

Members continued discussion of the proposed combined committee charge and made wording changes, including a shortened name and edits to ensure both committee roles were integrated throughout the general charge statement and detailed task descriptions. The number of members to recommend was discussed, along with including having alternates to make it easier to achieve a quorum. Detailed editing notes were made by town staff to update the draft document.

- *Recap – Bicentennial Pond universal access trail hike and dedication, and Whetten Woods Wander*

Tom and Sue Harrington reported that about 3 dozen people attended the Bicentennial Pond event, including two people in wheelchairs who traversed the entire trail. One wheelchair user was ecstatic that they could do this trail on their own, reinforcing that the accessibility goal has been well met. It was noted that there are several areas set aside as designated spaces for group discussion with students. The trail also is fully accessible from the Mansfield Middle school. The construction company was taking extensive notes on where improvements were needed to deal with the impacts of the heavy rain event just before the dedication.

About 16 people attended the Whetten woods event, including out of town families. Although it was muddy and early in the season there were numerous opportunities for natural resource education.

- *Tangent discussions during this recap (on following page)*

- *Trails Day 2018 (not on agenda)*

It was noted that Trails Day is June 3 and a hike is scheduled for Fifty Foot, which will overlap in parking demand with the opening day of the Mansfield Historical Society museum for the season. Logistics of parking and number of expected hikers were discussed to ensure they museum opening would not be adversely impacted.

- *Communication from Joshua's Trust regarding Whetten Woods Management (not on agenda)*

Joshua's Trust approach the town regarding doing some forestry management on the Whetten Woods preserve for habitat establishment, preemptive Ash removal, and invasive species control. Members agreed that Town staff should work to coordinate the actions with management goals for the town owned part of Whetten Woods

- *Connecticut Bird Atlas*

Sue Harrington reported on a meeting about the Atlas and reported that the data system the Atlas is using appears to allow parcel-specific records. She requested that when counters were making observations on Joshua's Trust or Town land they try to keep the records discrete for these parcels, to allow for later use of the data for management of preserved lands; and reported positive reaction to this request.

7. Executive session in accordance with CGS section 1200(6)(D)

- *Sale or purchase of Real Property*
- *Discussion of possible site selection*

Entered executive session 7:49 PM (moved T. Harrington; seconded Morrow)

Exited executive session at 8:32

8. Communications

Communications were noted as listed on the agenda.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 (move Wetherell, second Kessel)

Respectively Submitted

Ken Feathers, Secretary