

Parks and Natural Resources Committee
SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday June 11, 2019 7:00 PM
Mansfield Town Hall Conference Room B
Minutes -- FINAL

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM

2. Roll Call

Attending: Jim Morrow (Chair), Ken Feathers (secretary), Quentin Kessel (Cons. Com. Rep.), Tom Harrington, Sue Harrington, Michael Soares, Julianna Barrett (alt.)

Not present but on committee roster: Heidi Groeger (alt.), Vicky Wetherell

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Kaufman

3. Review of Minutes

The Minutes of the April 16, 2019 regular meeting were approved (moved T. Harrington, second Soares)

4. Opportunity for Public comment

No members of the public were present.

5. New Business

- *Sustainable CT Update - Equity*

The committee was updated on a recent presentation sponsored by the Sustainable CT program that addressed the need for all town committees to add outreach capability to ensure active participation by as many groups represented in the CERC town profile as possible. The goal is to ensure that all voices and groups are served well and well engaged with committee work.

Discussion focused on how to better outreach to the student population, which was perceived to be less participating than other town populations. Publicizing the recreation areas within walking distance of campus was discussed. Ideas included presentations to the Outing Club, the Asian Center and other focus groups on campus; and a foreign language version of the brochure. An anecdote was related that some people from more densely populated locations perceived the "wild" parks of Mansfield as uncomfortably dangerous, and some education may be appropriate. Coordinated communications, branding, and improved wayfinding were also mentioned.

6. Continuing business

- *Simpson Property Trail*

The committee reviewed and discussed the proposed eagle scout project, which will start soon.

There was generally expressed satisfaction with the proposed project.

The core trails are reported to be ready for blazing, however some areas will need guideposts due to no suitable trees. Various types of posts were discussed. Some optional loops still need the route finalized.

- *Connecticut Bird Atlas*

Sue Harrington reported that work on the spring phase of year 2 is in high gear from mid April through early July. The goal is to document and confirm nesting activity of less common species.

- *Outreach and Education*

The scheduled Mother's Day walk at Mount Hope Park was canceled due to weather conditions and trail flooding

The activity for Connecticut Trails Day at the pond loop at Bicentennial Pond was attended by 14 people, including several from minority groups or differently physically abled.
(a sidebar discussion of trail conditions ensued, along with noting that there was new beaver activity at the pond.)

Three Walktober events are planned:

- “the Unnatural History of Merrow Meadow”
- An exploration of the Fifty-foot Cliff Preserve
- A walk at Wolf Rock and Sawmill Brook

7. Communications

Communications were noted as listed on the agenda.

Summer meeting dates to reserve, if there is business to conduct, are 7/16 and 8/20

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

Entered executive session 8:14 PM moved T. Harrington seconded Feathers

Exited executive session at 8:27

A field trip will be scheduled by town staff

9. Other

No discussion.

10. Future Agendas

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM (move S. Harrington; second Soares)

Respectively Submitted

Ken Feathers, Secretary