

MCC

Milford Conservation Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday May 21, 2012. 6:00 PM

Parsons Government Complex, Conference Room A, 70 West River Street, Milford, CT 06460

MINUTES

Mr. Poutray called the meeting to order at 6:05. **Mr. Poutray** noted the lack of a quorum and those present agreed to review old business without voting anything.

Members attending: William Poutray (ch), Claire Casey, Steve Johnson, Gerard Loiselle

Absent: William M. Blotney, Dan C. Drago, Keith Dunn, Maureen Mauro-Desantie, Oden Seaholm

Staff attending: Meg Greene (rec sec)

Public comment

None.

Previous meeting minutes

Action on the minutes from the April 16, 2013, meeting was tabled until the June meeting.

Old Business

MILFORD LITTER CLEANUP CAMPAIGN - 50K BY EARTH DAY - FINAL UPDATE

Mr. Johnson reported that the litter cleanup campaign was a spectacular success with 62,473 pieces reported cleared as of May 11; a result that put the effort at 125% of goal. He said that school groups, civic groups, businesses, and families, participated. He posted a press release on the city's Facebook® page to share these results with the community. Mr. Johnson noted in the press release that the campaign was intended to complement the efforts of the Department of Public Works and that coordination with DPW, the city attorney's office and others is planned for future volunteer campaigns.

MILFORD EARTH DAY, SATURDAY MAY 11TH – REVIEW

Mr. Johnson reported 180 people participated despite the drizzle. Several projects were undertaken at Eisenhower Park, including 3 large-scale native species plantings and repainting the lodge floor. Two busses took 50 people to other sites in the city. About 60 volunteers, mostly from First Congregational Church and Wildemere Congregational Church, accomplished a lot in 1.5 hours at The Berm. They removed invasives and debris from around a silver maple tree with beautiful results. At Mondo Ponds, efforts centered on invasive species reduction and litter pickup. Winnie Wirth and Dan Drago oversaw collection of 19 bags of garlic mustard as well as bittersweet vine cutting. There was discussion of the propagation risk due to piles of invasive debris propagating, but Mr. Johnson assured the group that if cutting is done before the plants fruit out with seeds in fall, there is no danger and that further, the piles provide habitat for small wildlife. He noted that DEEP has guidelines for disposal of this type of brush.

Mr. Johnson noted that the day held good lessons for organizing future events. He felt more leadership volunteers could have made the day more productive and that the proximity to Mother's Day, a craft show on the green, and a Milford Trees, Inc. event may have impacted participation. **Ms. Casey** said there were visitors to the MCC table setup. The group expressed approval of the idea that, unlike other local Earth Day festivals or fairs, Milford's Earth Day emphasis is purely focused on service that can be leveraged to sustain a spirit of stewardship throughout year.

WEPAWAUG RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE (WRWA)

Mr. Johnson said buy-in from involved cities was continuing, including Woodbridge's new selectman. He reported that he had sent thank-you emails, provided status updates, requested help in meeting next-step goals, and asked for continued active participation. He said the Long Island Sound Futures Fund grant application has a regional watershed plan as its goal. He referred to a pending application to the CT DEEP/Rivers Alliance where the intention is to use a

development model from Fuss & O'Neill Civil and Environmental Engineering that DEEP prefers cities to follow support. He reviewed the status of grants to underwrite this effort, stating that Fuss & O'Neill matching funds were available. He commended the mayor with for reaching out to other communities. **Mr. Poutray** noted that matches can be in-kind through volunteers, providing an opportunity for the city to participate without a direct cash outlay.

OPEN SPACE (OS) AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENT PROJECTS: OPEN SPACE BASELINE INVENTORY

Mr. Johnson the inventory was about 60% complete, with 90+ parcels and 900 acres documented in Excel. Of those, 50-60 parcels were researched using title search for deed restrictions and ownership. He expects to have additional open space properties identified and entered into the spreadsheet by the next meeting.

OPEN SPACE (OS) AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENT PROJECTS: INVASIVE EDUCATION DISPLAY MATERIALS

Mr. Johnson said that in the months of April and May, there had been 10 projects that had mobilized 400 volunteers throughout the city.

OPEN SPACE (OS) AND NATURAL RESOURCES AGENT PROJECTS: GRANTS

Mr. Johnson said the America the Beautiful Grant is the next he'll work on. He's also writing a grant to acquire a storage container through DEEP to support placement of equipment for volunteer efforts. Results come in July and if the grant is successful, the container will probably go near the lodge in Eisenhower part. **Mr. Loiselle** commended Mr. Johnson's efforts. Mr. Johnson said he was also reviewing untapped opportunities to establish private/public partnerships.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Johnson provided a draft conservation mission statement as a basis for future discussion. A brief discussion of ensued in which **Mr. Poutray** underscored the advisory nature of the board, given that it's primary statutory mission being to advise Planning and Zoning on issues of Open Space. It was noted that as acquiring open space becomes less of an activity, advocating for stewardship of the spaces will play a role. **Mr. Poutray** noted that the mission statement should provide guidance and continuity for future committees. He said he'd like the whole committee to be able to give the same "elevator speech" to describe MCC mission.

Since no there was no quorum, the group decided to table new business.

Next month's meeting conflicts with one member's child's graduation, so the meeting date will be revisited.

The meeting ended at 7:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Greene, Recording Secretary