

Charlotte Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, August 22, 2017

In attendance: Amos Baehr, Meg Berlin, Susan Blood, Roel Boumans, Linda Radimer, Mary Van Vleck (notetaker), Absent: Derk Bergquist, Mike Kirk, Erika MacPherson
Guests: Mel Huff, Krista Hoffsis, Susan Smith

Amos distributed “long range planning work sheet” to each commissioner. (No discussion of this during this meeting)

DECISIONS

- I. Minutes Approval: A motion was made to approve the July minutes; this was seconded and the minutes were approved as written.
 - II. Invasives and the CCC budget
 - A. Krista Hoffsis of the Lewis Creek Association gave a review of this summer’s efforts to combat **Frogbit** in Town Farm Bay. The LCA will continue their work next summer, and she requested \$2700, the same amount allotted in the past several years. If the Frogbit populations remain at their current low level of around 5% cover, the LCA will consider treatments to limit the Purple Loosestrife and/or Flowering Reed populations.
 - B. Susan Smith, representing the Charlotte Invasives Collaborative (CHIC) reported that sixteen **phragmites** sites were treated this summer by Bob Hyams’s Habitat Restoration Solutions; she requested \$1000 from the CCC budget to continue the work in 2018. We talked briefly about the phragmites at the Rte 7 and Church Hill Road intersection; that patch is in the state’s right of way, and permission was requested and denied to tackle this weed with chemicals. We discussed removing it by digging or cutting.
 - C. Susan has contacted Andrew Milliken, US Fish and Wildlife manager, to inquire about obtaining more of the imported Galerucella beetles that live on and eventually destroy (or severely limit) **Purple Loosestrife**, (and only the Loosestrife) which has proliferated noticeably this summer
Roel expressed interest in learning more about the parsnip worm that lives on and weakens or destroys parsnip plants. (Yes!)
- Consented: The two requests, \$2700 for the LCA and \$1000 for CHIC, were approved unanimously.
- Consented: The commissioners made a proposal requesting that Susan for CHIC and Krista from the LCA return to the May CCC meeting to report and update us on their plans. This was passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- I. Status reports from working groups (5 min. each)
 - A. Connectivity – The group met August 14th at Ten Stones to inspect the cameras and lock boxes that we ordered. Linda and Susan B. both agreed to take a

camera home and become more familiar with it: how they work, where to place them where animals might cross. No future meeting is scheduled until we understand more about the cameras.

- B. Ecological Principles – no report
 - C. Education and Outreach – Mel suggested that before we plan to produce any videos for YouTube, (for example to explain ‘ecosystem services’), we should look into “social marketing” to identify and survey target audiences. We’d likely find several different audiences, and each might need a separate kind of presentation - a school group vs. an adult audience, for example. We want to harness people’s love of nature and lead them to think differently; for example, is an eight-foot wide trail through previously undisturbed areas good for us *and* for the wildlife? Not really. We also will need to evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to reach our audiences. Meg suggested that Mel contact her friend Rebecca Brookes and request help in how to increase our effectiveness in getting our messages out to others in town.
- II. Conservation Currents: Mary apologized, specifically to Meg Berlin, for not staying on top of the monthly schedule of people committed to writing for the Charlotte News. In *September*, Amos will write a column, and Roel will write the *October* essay on Insectivorous Plants. Linda Radimer volunteered to write an essay for *November* on Turkeys. *Each article should be about 800 words and is due to Lynn Monty (news@thecharlottenews.org) on the first Wednesday of the month.* Mary has electronic copies of the TCN “Contributor Submission Guidelines” that she can easily send out.
 - III. Members of the Trails Committee will join us at our September 25th CCC meeting. Because most commissioners have grave reservations about the currently proposed Town Trail, planned to be eight feet wide and running through sections of wetlands and forested areas that are currently undisturbed, we agreed to meet again specifically to formulate a unified voice that we will present to the Trails group. A date will be set by Doodle poll later this week, as we are running out of time this evening.
 - IV. CCC 2017-2018 Budget: At the interim meeting in the next 2-3 weeks, we will discuss next year’s CCC budget, due to the town Select Board on September 11th. The next budget will be similar to the current year’s budget, though with closer attention paid to the various categories, which must be adhered to more closely than we have in the past.

The meeting was adjourned close to 9:30 pm.