

Burrillville Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
February 20, 2024

The meeting was called to order by: Ron Lapierre at 6:46pm

**Members Present:** Ron Lapierre, Roberta Lacey, Samantha Young, Adam Schatz, Paul Menard. **Members absent:** Monique DeRoche, Michael Longenbaker

**Guests:** None

**Accept January Minutes** – Roberta Lacey motioned to accept; Paul Menard seconded. Unanimously accepted. Due to the absence of Monique DeRoche, Adam Schatz was assigned to take minutes.

**Wallum Lake** – Paul Menard reported that the current water level is at 584. Next summer, the level will be maintained at 585.42. No report has been received from Jeff McCormick yet.

**Wildlife Conservation Plan**– Samantha Young and Roberta Lacey provided an update. Roberta and Sam have documents that they are planning to share with Ray Goff (Town Planner) in early March. They also connected with Amanda Frietas (DEM) in an effort to receive guidance on how the BCC can effectively influence proposed projects that are of concern to the Committee however Amanda shared that there are limited tools which can be leveraged. Amanda's opinion was that an actively engaged citizen community that attend meetings are the most effective method she's seen. Proposed goals of the plan:

- Educate the Zoning Board
- Create a flow chart to facilitate communication between Zoning and BCC
- Advocate for inclusion of language around "green spaces" within proposed developments such as shrubbery or trees as a buffer between roadway and development space

**Water protection** – Ron Lapierre provided a report. Bruce will no longer be taking samples from Spring Lake. The BCC currently spends \$700 to test for oxygen levels, presence of Blue/Green algae, and water temperature. The committee will need to decide if they want to continue to fund this or if the money should be allocated for other initiatives.

Burrillville falls within the Blackstone Watershed and is therefore eligible to receive grants. Ron sent correspondence in an effort to gather more information.

Samples of the RI DEM educational pamphlets outlining how to keep RI's water clean were provided. Recommendation from the committee that we create a Burrillville version of these to share with the community.

**Quarterly Conservation programs – RI Tree:** Roberta shared information on the RI Tree council which provides a listing of champion trees in Rhode Island. Nominations can be submitted for trees considered culturally, historically and/or biologically notable. Roberta has arranged for a speaker from RI tree to make a presentation on April 4th at the library. Mike has reached out to his RI tree contact to supply BCC with information about the presentation for the creation of promotion materials.

**Beaver Deceivers:** The town currently hires local trappers to remove nuisance beavers. Roberta recommended that the BCC create a presentation on alternative measures that may be more fiscally and environmentally friendly options outlining examples of devices which can be placed in waterways that are 97% effective at maintaining the flow of water. Roberta proposed that Jeff McCormick join her when Mike Callahan evaluates placing a device on her property.

**Salamander Crossing:** Sam will no longer be facilitating the Salamander Crossing. Both dates reserved at the library have conflicts and will need to be canceled.

**Guided Hikes:** BCC will take over the guided hike beginning in the Spring. Dates will need to be set.

**Full Moon Hike:** Currently scheduled for Friday, 2/23 however, the weather report looks like it will rain. Conversation with Martha will need to take place and a decision will need to be made on if the hike is rescheduled or canceled.

**Town Properties and Conservation land project status and activity report updates:** Ron Lapierre provided a verbal status description for each of the properties shown on the list below.

1. **Nipmuc Trail** – Sam walked through the trail and noted that the bog bridges were all moved from the flooding and will need to be fixed. Red trail needs to have tree removed
2. **Lapham Farm:** Green trail has been established by Ron and blazed
3. **Branch River Park:** Last clean-up effort took care of all the downed trees
4. **Lodge Trail:** Trail is in good shape however Roberta noted invasive plants and suggested reaching out to fire department on the potential for controlled burn.
5. **Duck Pond:** Trail is in good shape

The committee discussed the potential for installing a disc golf course on one of the trails. Ron recommended that the BCC reach out to Economic Redevelopment on options.

**Route 102 Adopt-a-Spot:** No update to report

**Town Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board** – Ron provided update that the Planning/Zoning meeting on Wallum Lake properties was delayed


**Fiscal Year Budget** – Roberta provided receipt of copying bill for trail guides. Paul Menard motion to approve reimbursement of \$35.25 for bill. Second by Adam Schatz. Unanimously accepted

**Old Business** - None

**Mail and Correspondence** – None

**Adjourned** at 8:30pm. Samantha Young motioned to adjourn, and Paul Mendard seconded. Unanimously accepted.

Next Monthly meeting is scheduled for March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

  
Ronald P. Lapierre

3/19/24