

**Town of Chester
Wason Pond Commission Meeting
Monday, March 6th, 2017
PACT Studio Meeting Room
Approved Minutes**

I. Call to Order – Open Meeting

As Acting Chairman, Mr. Myette called this meeting of the Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission to order at 7:05pm.

Members Present:

Kevin Kistler, Recreation Commission
Stephen O. Landau, Selectman Liaison (departed meeting at 8:22pm)
Chuck Myette, Acting Chair; Treasurer / Conservation Commission
Darrell Quinn, Alternate
Corinna Reishus, Recreation Commission
Herb Rowell, Alternate / Chester Seniors

Members Absent:

Patrick Connelly
Tom Edwards, Member at Large
Chris Hadik, Member at Large

Others Present at Various Times:

John Dalrymple
Jay Rowden

II. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Myette reported that the Wason Pond budget has a negative balance of two hundred fifty-two dollars and twenty cents (\$252.20): no monies have been spent from the preexisting balance of nine hundred and fifty-four dollars (\$954.00), aside from the Security Expense from last Summer.

Ms. Reishus moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; Mr. Quinn seconded the motion. The vote was six in favor with Messrs. Connelly, Edwards and Hadik absent; so moved.

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 6th, 2017 meeting were reviewed.

Mr. Quinn moved to accept the minutes; Mr. Rowell seconded the motion. The vote was six in favor with Messrs. Connelly, Edwards, and Hadik absent; so moved.

IV. Recreation Commission

4.1 Irrigation Proposal

John Dalrymple, Town Lawn Maintenance employee, presented a proposal for a ball field irrigation system on behalf of the Recreation Commission. Mr. Dalrymple explained that TruGreen currently applies a slow-release, phosphorous-free fertilizer with a lower-than-recommended nitrogen percentage (NPK: 16-0-16). Due to aeration measures, the small perforations in the field allow for proper absorption of water and nutrients while inhibiting runoff. Additionally, lime and drought-friendly seed were applied this past Fall. Per regulations, EPA data for all chemicals applied must be visibly posted at the fields for 48 hours after application. However, traces of pesticides are usually gone within 2-4 days. Mr. Myette felt it would be essential for all of this information to be readily available to anyone with concerns (health, ecological, etc.).

Mr. Landau wanted to make sure there were no areas of the field upon which chemicals should not be applied due to proximity to the Pond; it was confirmed that this was no longer a concern. It was also noted that the field had been structured so that it is pitched away from the Pond. Mr. Dalrymple was confident that this proposed irrigation system would be safe to humans and the environment.

With an average depth of 6 feet and a span of approximately 14 acres, the Pond's volume is thought to be about 30 Million gallons. The "Water Cannon" would pump approximately 25,000 gallons of water per week at about 50 gallons per minute (GPM); no permits are required at this level. Ms. Reishus explained that an amount of \$15,000 was being requested for this; which would allow for purchase of hose.

Exactly where the water would be drawn from the Pond was discussed. Mr. Dalrymple imagined it would be near the Fire Department-placed hydrant; Mr. Landau suggested running pipe under the bridge between the Upper and Lower sections of the Pond. Mr. Myette thought that the dug well near the field should be pumped to determine GPM yield; and / or to consider running pipe from the pond to the well to establish storage capacity.

Regarding the power source for the pump, it was noted that this would most likely be some form of gas-powered generator. However, Mr. Dalrymple will call the retailer tomorrow to determine alternate forms of power (i.e. electricity). Watering will be done during evening or early morning hours to maximize effectiveness and minimize water waste; ideally the Water Cannon will only be operated while a Maintenance employee is present.

4.2 Baseball and Softball Field Proposal

Jay Rowden of Chester Baseball and Softball Association appeared before the Commission to present the low-impact playing fields proposal. Mr. Myette wondered if mounds may be temporary and Mr. Rowden confirmed that he has seen temporary mounds. The Association hopes to install 20' high, 10' long backstops with overhangs on top for each of the 2 fields, using low-visibility black or green fencing. Portable benches, each flanked by an 8' by 20' protective fence would be installed as well. Mr. Rowden mentioned that each Spring, the Association weeds, places fill, and performs general field maintenance and would continue to do so. They would also "skin" the fields.

Mr. Landau asked how long it would be before the Town would have to take over the maintenance for the fields. Mr. Landau was aware that this was virtually impossible to answer, nor did he expect an answer; and he acknowledged the great deal of effort and resources that Mr. Rowden and many other volunteers have put forth over the years to benefit youth recreational pursuits in Town. Mr. Landau wished it to be known many concerns continue to be voiced that Wason Pond was "supposed to not cost the Town anything" and that much has already been spent (i.e. \$40,000 to remediate a stump dump).

Mr. Myette added the reminder that the intent is that Wason Pond is kept as a Conservation and *low-impact* Recreation area; Ms. Reishus agreed and confirmed on behalf of the Recreation Commission that its goal is NOT to create a recreation complex. Mr. Rowden confirmed that portable means of scorekeeping would only be used and there are no plans to place scoreboards. The Association has thought of having a memorial tree fundraiser as well.

Ms. Reishus made a motion to move forward with the ballfields as outlined in the Wason Fields proposal of the Chester Baseball and Softball Association; Mr. Kistler seconded the motion. Mr. Landau added an amendment, "at no cost to the Town," and Ms. Reishus clarified "at no *additional tax* cost to the Town." The vote was four in favor with Messrs. Landau and Myette abstaining and with Messrs. Connelly, Edwards and Hadik absent; so moved.

Mr. Myette reminded that that the only time that it was conveyed to the Town that Wason Pond would cost nothing was when it was initially purchased (for \$1.55 Million, of a \$3 Million bond written for Conservation Easement and Land).

V. Conservation Commission

Ms. Reishus showed photos of a tree damaged by a Beaver as well as trees being tapped for syrup. The Committee wondered who might be responsible for the tapping; then it was decided that Mr. Myette and / or Mr. Landau would investigate further.

Mr. Myette acknowledged that the Easement allowed removal of damaged or diseased trees; Mr. Landau suggested that beaver-damaged trees be cut just above the part affected by the animal, to serve as an exhibit for visitors. Mr. Myette asked the Members their thoughts on enlisting Bryan Sullivan to trap beavers; all were agreeable to this. Mr. Myette will email Mr. Sullivan to obtain his recommendations.

Ms. Reishus showed photos of old traffic signs (i.e. "Slow") remaining on trees from when the property was a campground. It was agreed that the County workers would be enlisted to remove these. Mr. Myette invited anyone interested in organizing a clean-up party at the Area to do so.

VI. Miscellaneous

Mr. Myette reminded that there are vacant seats in both the Wason Pond Commission and the Conservation Commission and encouraged anyone interested to come forward.

Regarding the Statewide trail mapping project taking place: although Chester is not participating as a town, the Conservation Commission is facilitating some trail mapping.

It was noted that Caelan Dunwoody is aware that he must return to the Commission to finalize plans to proceed with his Eagle Scout project to place Flora and Fauna educational kiosks at Wason Pond.

VII. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission will take place Monday, April 3rd, 2017 at 7:00pm at the Municipal Complex.

Ms. Reishus moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Rowell seconded the motion. The vote was five in favor with Messrs. Connelly, Edwards, Hadik and Landau absent; so moved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Rose Wilson
Recording Secretary