

**WASON POND CONSERVATION & RECREATION COMMISSION**

**April 4, 2022**

**Approved Minutes**

**7:00 PM**

**Members present:**

Chris Hadik, Chairman  
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale, Treasurer  
Sandy Wright  
Kristina Snyder  
Kathy Dircks  
David Webster  
Darrell Quinn, Alternate  
John Dalrymple, Alternate  
Chuck Myette, Selectmen's Liaison

**Guests:**

Selectman Steven O. Landau  
Ranger John Wright  
Chester PACT

**1. Open Meeting – New Business**

Chairman Hadik called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

**a. Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Neff Ragsdale reported \$36.89 in electricity use for the caretaker's cottage and \$16.21 for the bathhouse electricity, for a total of \$53.10. The balance is -\$4,036.85, which is the result of the public safety emergency (closure of the Causeway [Ash Street] Bridge of \$5,118.54).

*Ms. Dircks moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

**b. Approval of Minutes – March 7, 2022**

*Ms. Wright to approve the March 7, 2022 minutes as written. Ms. Dircks seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor except Ms. Neff Ragsdale, who abstained. The motion passed.*

**c. 'Frog Pond' crossing**

Ms. Snyder reported that materials are being thrown into the wetlands to create a bridge. She is concerned about this becoming a safety hazard. It is a well-used part of the loop but also a sensitive habitat due to the presence of vulnerable species. This is not an established path although it is being used that way. Members of the WPC will remove the materials and haul them off the property so they can't be used again.

**d. Reappointments: Kathy Dircks, Kristina Snyder, David Webster, BOS April 28<sup>th</sup>**

Chairman Hadik reminded the selected members that their appointment to the Commission is expiring and they need to be reappointed, if they want to continue as members of the WPC. Ms.

Snyder will ask the Chester Conservation Commission if they want her to continue representing them. The Board of Selectmen have asked that the reappointments occur at the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **2. Selectmen's Liaison**

### **a. Update on Ash Street bridge**

Selectman Myette reported that the cost of constructing the bridge was not approved at the Town Meeting. The engineering cost was not on the Warrant Article, as Conservation and Recreation are paying for this. The contract will most likely be issued on Friday to the company that provided the estimate. The construction of the bridge would not have occurred this year anyway. There are two proposals being worked on to help fund the construction. The full price of construction will be known once bids are requested and received.

The current bridge is temporary, so must be removed after six months. The Building Inspector would need to continue approving it as temporary every six months for it to remain. An engineer has been asked to determine how much weight it will carry.

## **3. Recreation Commission**

### **a. Update**

Ms. Dircks reported the portable toilets have been placed near the fields and at the playground. More will be added as traffic increases.

Chester Baseball and Softball Association will start using the fields on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

The last Wason Pounder will be on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The organizers have asked the Board of Selectman to not allow any animals on the property the day before for safety reasons.

Recreation has released the impact fees to cover half of the engineering costs for the Causeway Bridge.

The Fishing Derby will tentatively be the first weekend in June. Ms. Dircks is working with the Chester Rod & Gun Club regarding placement of fishing line collection boxes.

## **4. Conservation Commission**

### **a. Beaver update**

Mr. Webster reported there are three beaver lodges on the property. Ms. Snyder said Mr. Chouinard will remove the debris that is collecting at one end of the bridge. Mr. Webster is concerned that removing the debris is a safety issue and suggested relocating the beavers. Ms. Snyder said more beavers will move in and any plans for removal should be brought to the Conservation Commission first. Chairman Hadik pointed out the new bridge will be designed to hopefully prevent beavers being able to dam it.

### **b. Milkweed and pollinator project location**

Ms. Dircks said the seniors are not in support of a pollinator area being established near the Community Center for fear of being stung. Ms. Snyder said the project is still in the planning stages. Ms. Dircks suggested Ms. Snyder meet with the seniors to explain the project to them. Selectman Myette suggested conducting a presentation for the seniors regarding pollinators.

Mr. Dalrymple verified that the Town Maintenance crews will not mow the pollinator areas this

year.

**c. Kiosk**

Ms. Snyder said the Conservation Commission is considering adding information regarding the wildlife at Wason Pond to the kiosk to help engage visitors with the natural aspects of the property.

**5. Ranger John Wright**

**a. Update**

Mr. Wright said that it's quiet on the property. The trails are muddy. The playground is getting a lot of use. Selectman Myette said the walkway installed by Eagle Scout Alex Brillhart worked well to cross the flooded area. Mr. Webster said some of the boards have been broken by horses crossing the bridge, even though they are not supposed to, and need to be replaced.

**6. Master Plan - Projects**

**a. Pavilion**

Chairman Hadik reported the pavilion project is still on hold pending the outcome of the bridge.

**7. Miscellaneous**

**a. Firemen's Muster in 2022**

Chairman Hadik has no update on the muster. None of the fire departments want to commit to attending at this point. The 5K will still occur that day.

**b. ADA compliance ramp status**

Selectman Myette reported they are waiting for the surveyor to confirm that it meets specifications. The Community Center is open, although accommodations have to be made for handicapped individuals to enter.

**c. Erosion by the covered bridge and the beach**

Selectman Myette reported that Maintenance Director Kavanaugh has inspected the area and will have stone applied and vegetation removed.

**8. Adjournment and set date for next meeting (Monday, May 2, 2022)**

*Ms. Snyder moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 PM. Mr. Webster seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary