



**Town of South Thomaston, Maine**  
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**Selectboard:**  
Jeff Northgraves  
Walter Reitz  
John Spear

Conservation Commission Minutes  
Date: December 15, 2021, 5:00 PM  
Place: Municipal Building

Conservation Commission Members Present: Linda Garat, Theo Pratt, Leslie Spear, Henry Spencer, Sondra Wallace.

Others Present: None.

1. Call to Order by Chair Theo Pratt.
2. Minutes for the meeting on October 13 were approved, and draft November 10 Minutes were distributed for review, comments, and approval at the January 12 meeting.
3. a. Regarding the Weskeag River Monitoring Project, Theo clarified that currently the STCC is not involved in the program, one factor being that the cost of bacterial processing per season is approximately \$1,000, and it is not covered by the State of Maine DEP. She suggested that sales of a book by Don Reimer could be a potential source of some funding for the monitoring. Henry Spencer emphasized the importance of projects of this nature, despite the fact that the Weskeag flows beyond our town's border. He aptly stated... "upstream matters to downstream, even if it's not all in South Thomaston."  
  
b. Sondra Wallace indicated that there have been no developments with respect to the two parcels of land on Chapel Street. This topic will remain on the agenda for the next meeting. She will prepare a draft of a presentation for the Commission Members to consider, which could subsequently be submitted to the Select Board or the Planning Board. Sondra affirmed that the only way to move forward is for the land to be offered by the owner as a gift, and he appears to be willing to continue to discuss this option.  
  
c. Theo does not seem to be included on the [conservationcommission@souththomaston.me](mailto:conservationcommission@souththomaston.me) distribution list. She has not been receiving emails and will contact Terri Baines. Theo also mentioned that \$50 of our funds in the town bank account was allotted to setting up the above email designation.  
  
d. An update on establishing a website for the Commission is tabled until January.  
  
e. Theo reported that our payment of \$100 was processed by the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions, so the STCC is now officially a member. We look forward to benefitting from its guidance and resources.  
  
f. About public presentations, Theo put forth several speakers whom we might invite in the Spring: Don Reimer, Keel Kemper (Regional Biologist with the Maine Department of Inland

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Fisheries and Wildlife), Krista Tripp of Aphrodite Oysters, and Wes Pratt re: storm surge monitoring. She requested that each of us think about other speakers and topics, adding that we do not necessarily have to focus on *problems* – the talks could be about nature. Sondra said that ideally these presentations will be monthly, building community interest, and Henry suggested adding Annette Naegel to the list of speakers, as well as asking her for the names of other area experts. In terms of specific topics, Sondra cited recycling and what happens to all the effort we direct towards it?

Theo pointed out that our monthly meetings are not included on the town website's calendar, and she will follow up on this. Another matter for consideration is training on the A/V system, if the STCC wants to offer to the public our talks via Zoom.

g. Regarding funds in the town bank account, from a total of \$210, to recap, \$100 went to the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions, \$50 to establish the Commission email, therefore \$60 remains. Further discussion on this subject will take place in January.

h. Henry has initiated research on procedural rules. He is interested in engaging high school students in community service and ascertaining what the legal parameters would be in doing so. He also asked if the STCC has a file drawer in the Municipal Building, and will speak with Terri Baines about this.

4. New Business: On December 14, Theo attended a webinar of approximately one hour in duration sponsored by the Governor's Office on Planning for Climate Resilience. She recommends that each member watch this important program, either together – possibly with the public – in the Municipal Building, or individually at home. Starting on January 1, towns can apply for a Maine Community Action Grant on a first-come, first-served basis, with funds being initially dispersed on March 22, then in August. The application process will likely be detailed, and there appears to be different tiers of involvement: community groups, groups of towns, and funding for professional facilitators. Is the Select Board or the Planning Board aware of or working on this opportunity?
5. Correspondence: None received.
6. Items for next Agenda: Theo stipulated that the STCC will not have a budget until next summer. Sondra replied that there is a timetable for this, and she can track it down.
7. Motion to Adjourn. It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned, and the motion passed.