



Town of South Thomaston, Maine
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Conservation Commission Meeting, June 12, 2024
In-Person Meeting at the Town Office, with Zoom Video Conferencing

STCC Commissioners present: Linda Garat, Catherine Lerne, John Poirier, Henry Spencer, Sondra Wallace

STCC Commissioner not present: Leslie Spear

I. Call to Order. Sondra Wallace, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

II. Adjustments to Agenda. None.

III. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (May 8, 2024). Catherine Lerne made a motion to accept the Minutes, seconded by Henry Spencer, then unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business.

- a. Earth Day Clean-Up: Future Plans (Henry Spencer proposal). Postponed.
- b. Update on South Thomaston Forest Preserve. Sondra confirmed that we are provisionally approved for the *Land for Maine's Future* grant of \$67,000. We still have to complete the survey, establish a clear title for the Preserve and obtain title insurance, ascertain environmental hazards (generated by a state agency), have a forester establish a 10-year plan, and find an appraiser. Regarding the latter, Catherine stated that John Spear has a list of Yellow Book appraisers, i.e., those individuals who have undergone government vetting and training, to be followed by overseeing by a second vetted and trained individual. She added that there are no local appraisers on the list.

Sondra said that we don't know if Terri Baines has written our existing donors asking if their contributions can be repurposed, now that we have the provisional grant and John Spear's approval of the letter (with a couple of amendments). Sondra also mentioned that Marie McNeely, Co-Lead of the Georges River Land Trust, said that when South Thomaston issues a press release about the LMF grant, it should be coordinated with the GRLT.

Further to a forester, Sondra and Catherine are working on obtaining a second quote, the first being from Maren Granstrom, who charges for her services per acre (the second expert being considered charges per hour). The end goal is to map the land (in terms of levels, tree species, where trees might be cut, trail location, etc.) and establish a 10-year plan. Establishing this plan is another condition of qualifying for the LMF grant. Catherine noted that there is availability of matching grants for forester services.

Finally, Sondra said that the STCC could always consult with the conservation commissions of St. George and Owls Head, since they have already been through the process of applying for – and been awarded – LMF grants.

- c. Update on Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program. John Poirier, a volunteer for the program, said that the first sampling was successfully conducted last week and took about 45 minutes. Sondra reminded everyone about the Town ordinances regarding accessing or crossing private property. Notifying property owners each and every time we plan to sample, and getting their written permission in advance is required. However, the required notice could be a single advance notice of all planned sampling dates and times.
- d. Report on May 9 STCC-STCRC presentation to Historical Society. Sondra reported that the presentation went very well. Kathy Florance of the Historical Society said she received a number of positive comments about it.

V. New Business. John brought up the subject of Maine Coast Seafood, a closed business at 98 Island Road. He remarked that there is a lot of trash in the water, and a large diesel fuel tank with hoses in the water. Catherine said that this property has been discussed by the Select Board, and she thinks that the Town is at the stage of sending official letters. She made a motion for the STCC to find out more about this issue, Henry seconded it, then it was unanimously approved. John agreed to contact Terri Baines, in her capacity of Code Enforcement Officer, so hopefully action can be initiated.

VI. Correspondence. None.

VII. Items for next Agenda. Nothing to list at this time.

VIII. Adjourn. Without objection, Sondra adjourned the meeting at 5:40PM.

STCC APPROVED ON JULY 10, 2024.