

## **MINUTES OF APRIL 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 MEETING**

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the conference room at the Longmeadow Police Station.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Al Laakso, Peter Bouvier, Andrea Chasen, John Bresnahan, Christopher Nolan, James Ryan, Stephen Gazillo, Wayne Ottani. **Absent:** David Dumais.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Tom Baggott from Baggott Farms.

**MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:** Chair Al Laakso made a motion to accept the minutes of February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 as presented and Peter Bouvier seconded the motion. All in favor, minutes were accepted.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Salary Account \$5,783.71; Maintenance \$205; Office Supplies \$47.39; Misc. \$709.58; Con Com Trust Fund \$9,231.91; Con Com Wetland Protection Fund \$7,360.65.

The Commission extended a warm welcome to its newest member, associate James Ryan.

### **DISCUSSIONS:**

**APPROVE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR USE OF CONSERVATION LAND** – Chair Al Laakso proposed a minor amendment to the document “Rules and Regulations for Use of Conservation Land” after discussions with TGP and Amtrak regarding the use of discontinued roads. The proposal was to replace the term “residents” with “visitors” on the first sentence of the document. Mr. Laakso made a motion to amend the aforementioned document as noted and Mr. Stephen Gazillo seconded the motion. All in favor 6-0 and motion passed.

**TOM BAGGOTT FARM PLANS** – Mr. Tom Baggott provided the following updates:

1. Seeding of non-GMO sweet corn is underway, planting will be sequential. Yellow, green and gray squash will also be planted later on in the season.
2. The soils are protected with both biodegradable plastic and cloth, which allows faster maturity and prevents frost damage.
3. The farming process is practiced with IPM (integrated pest management) and use of chemicals is kept to a minimum as the leaf recycling program contributes to soil enrichment and regeneration. Some of the herbicides (such as Atrazine and Zidua) and some fertilizers (such as Urea and Ammonium Sulfate) are used only if necessary. Use of insecticide will depend on the season's conditions. As an example, last year's corn did not require the use of insecticide. Mr. Baggott indicated that, if necessary, he could provide notification if and when a particular chemical were to be applied but pointed out that usually the decision is made swiftly depending on weather and other conditions – the intent is to avoid chemical intervention unless absolutely necessary to salvage the crops.
4. During harvest time a portable toilet is made available.
5. The variety of crops depends on the commodity, most of the products are sold to chains.
6. The traffic uptick on West Road during the fall has caused discomfort among the neighbors in the area but an alternative would be for vehicular traffic to be re-directed thru Tina Lane once Amtrak completes its railroad crossing project.

The commissioners thanked Mr. Baggott for his updates. Mr. Baggott left the meeting at 7:55pm.

**TREASURER APPOINTMENT AND TRANSITION** – Mr. Peter Bouvier announced that he will retire at the end of his current term. Mr. John Bresnahan made a motion to nominate Mr. David Dumais as the new treasurer effective July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2019 and Mr. Peter Bouvier seconded the motion. All in favor 6-0, motion passed.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSERVATION LAND PROJECTS** – Some of the ideas to be explored are:

1. Generate walking trails on conservation land behind the Wolf Swamp fields and create an access point on Oak Hollow Drive. The conservation land consists of 2 conservation parcels for a total of 53 acres.
2. Install bird-nesting boxes along the meadows.
3. Install signs that discourage bird feeding and educate visitors on the harmful effects of this practice.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS** – The following items were discussed:

1. Due to the unguarded Bark Haul Rd. railroad crossing, TPG is interested in exploring an alternative route to access the valve stations by traveling thru Tina Lane and turning left on Old West Road. This would require clearing up the existing road and repairing the damaged culvert or installing a bridge to handle vehicles. There is an intent to meet in the near future with the town, TGP and Silvio O. Conte officials to discuss alternatives.
2. Mr. Wayne Ottani announced that he won't seek a new term as commissioner and is grateful for the time he's been allowed to serve. Along with Mr. Bouvier's departure, the Commission will have two commissioner openings.
3. LCC has sent the Conservation Commission a copy of an easement agreement with TGP for a metering station on LCC property. Per Section 61B, Recreational land taxation policy, the town has a 120 day period for a first refusal option to make a bona fide offer to purchase the land or the lease.
4. Chair Al Laakso and Ms. Andrea Chasen participated in the recent Municipal Vulnerability Program workshop and Fire Chief John Dearborn has offered to provide a report presentation in the near future.
5. TEC Associates has provided the standard Amtrak vegetation control program for this year.

**OTHER BUSINESS** – The following items were discussed:

1. The commission will look into purchasing clean loam as part of an intended donation for Community Gardens.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano  
*Secretary*