

Yarmouth Parks and Lands
Meeting minutes
July 6, 2022

Committee members:

Karyn MacNeill, YCS Director-abs.
Heather Abbott, Council Liaison
Erik Donohoe, Parks Specialist

Mary Thorp (2022)
Ron Dupuis (2024), chair
Vance Brown (2023)
Clyde Hodgkin (2023)- resigned
Lisa Small (2022)
Joe Noel (2024)- absent
Josh Royte (2024)

Ron calls the meeting to order at 6:03pm.
Committee welcomes Heather Abbott as our new council liaison and thanks Tim Shannon for his service. Committee members and Heather give brief intros.
Review of June minutes. Josh motions, Lisa seconds, unanimous.

Erik Updates:

Has been working on vegetation management. Also working on the small bike-ped trail to Tenney St.

Hopes to work soon on Village Run concerning the storm water pond. Needs volunteer turnout.

Bridges in Pratt's will be tackled with the public works dept. Has met with Steve Johnson, engineer, and Geoff Shallard, retired engineer and long-time volunteer.

Ron comments that the Tenney connector looks good.

Josh asks about the invasive species management contract. Bittersweet has really taken off. Eric replies that he is working on it.

Mary asks if horses continue to be a issue in Pratt's. Eric says not really with the dry weather.

Tree committee: Lisa reports.

Committee has been official for 2 months now and David Craig is liaison.

The goal is to develop a three-pronged approach:

A tree protection plan (by species)

Promoting diversity in tree types

Using native wherever possible

For the Maine streetscape plan, need medium street trees ex. 3 honey locust in front of old Dunkin location. Finds that many residents are asking for guidance in their plantings.

There is a green funnel trap in Latchstring to test for the Emerald Ash Borer.

Also, the town was given 100 saplings that are now being tended to.

Rebecca Rundquist has worked with a biologist and the schools and planted sycamore and tulip poplar.
Committee is also working on ordinances for accurate tree lists.
As for the tree warden position, committee is waiting on reply.
Vance mentions trees on Main St. and reiterates the importance of native plantings.
Trees could be listed as: large canopy, medium, and small ornamentals.
Lisa also says trees should be rated on their resistance to climate change.

Land Acquisition Finding update: Josh

Group currently meeting is composed of Nat, Karyn, Erik and Josh. Talked about landowner outreach and more dialog with council.
Need to rank values and have better understanding of priorities. Ex. scoring possible priorities for open space? Other method is by parcel. Josh shares maps and wants to share with council and town planner.
But how do we afford? Quiet outreach to homeowner? easements? Land bonds?
(note: still paying off schools)
Met with Nat to talk about area around Frank Knight Forest.
Josh poses question on how we get more earnest money?
Erik mentions an aspirational letter. Option to purchase vs. right of first refusal is discussed. First option gives more time to work on the acquisition. First step is landowner outreach.
What would dialogue with council look like.... Heather would like to see more conversations with council.
Josh mentions funds that are available ex. Land for Maine's Future
Vance asks about other council emerging priorities. Heather expresses that timing is the issue- we are currently in some tough budget years.
Josh states that there are usually matching requirements for grants.

New Business:

Lisa asks about grass seeding. Is there a standard?
Josh says there are different conservation mixes. Public Works is the dept. to ask.
Erik says the DOT uses a lot that are non-native. Last used the CMP mix. Need to talk to Eric Street and Steve Johnson.
Heather suggests info for homeowners. Lisa mentions a connection with the Wild Seed Project in North Yarmouth.
Vance expresses concern about the condition of the steps to the water at SOCI.

Announcements:

Clyde Hodgkins has resigned.
Mary voices concerns about how long it took to get a new member in place in the past and the importance of enough members to vote.
Last virtual meeting will be August 3rd. Heather will check on the current guidance about in-person meetings.

Vance motions to adjourn. Ron seconds. Unanimous at 7:09.

