

Hallowell Conservation Commission September 18, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Rosemary Presnar, Chair; Ben Godsoe, Maureen Drouin, Jean McWilliams, Karen Simpson

1. Karen Simpson volunteered to serve as recorder for this meeting.
2. **Planning for 2024**
Budget updates: battery powdered weedwhacker (primary use at Berry CA)– approx. \$300.
There are 3 Commission openings for 2024. Members were asked to think about possible candidates.
3. **Open Space District Ordinance updates**
The Council referred the draft Open Space Ordinance to ORC at the August Council meeting. Awaiting a scheduled meeting. Information is still needed from Vaughan Homestead and Kennebec Land Trust. Latest draft is dated 7-11-23 In HCC Google docs.
4. **Grow Green & Healthy Hallowell (GGHH) and Land Management Ordinance (LMO) update**
The Council unanimously passed the LMO on September 26. Mike Frett made a motion that the Code Officer(CEO), not the Council, should designate staff to deliver information to offenders. This motion passed. The LMO is now posted to City Ordinances, Chapter 4-SubChapter 7. GGHH will update all reference and education materials to match approved ordinance. Next meeting is Nov 13.
5. **Hallowell Climate Action update(also reference HCA meeting minutes): Window Dressers** will be working November 3 to 8 at the Multicultural Center. Volunteers can sign up for 4 hour shifts and there are still slots available. Measurements have been taken at qualifying homes so that the window frames will arrive precut and will only need to be assembled.
EV Charging station can now be used and fees paid online at a cost of \$.30/kw hour
Climate Resiliency Partnership grant has been submitted to provide a comprehensive energy audit for City Hall as well as installation of heat pumps on the building's third floor (it was awarded! Congrats HCA!)
6. **Vaughan Brook Watershed Water Quality Monitoring**
Sites in the watershed have been monitored 7 times this summer. Final data set will be collected next week. Over the past 3 years data shows that water quality degrades as it passes through the watershed, testing pristine at Outer Central and degraded as it reaches Vaughan Woods. We will be exploring possible grants for the threatened watershed for a management plan for NonPoint Source pollution and runoff.
7. **Granite City Park Working Group/Tree Board**
The Tree Board was awarded a Project Canopy grant for additional native trees and shrubs for Granite City Park. Volunteers, assisted by Public Works, will gather at the park on September 23 to plant and mulch the new plantings.
8. **Recreation Commission** is seeking to hire a Maine Conservation Corps Environmental Steward for eight months at a salary of approx. \$15,000. The steward will be charged with playing a hands-on role in managing and maintaining our city parks and lands. The steward will collaborate with HCC as well as other city commissions.
HCC is recommending that **E-bikes** be allowed on RES trails with the following restrictions: Class 1 bikes would be allowed everywhere; Class 2 and 3 on snowmobile trails, i.e. the Quarry Trail and the Pipeline Trail. This is consistent with Manchester's plan approved by the Board of Selectmen
9. **Berry Conservation Area**
Jean and Karen worked with 5 UMA students, fulfilling their community service, to clear knotweed along the trail leading into the field. They also flagged multiflora roses in the upper third of the field, in preparation for cutting later in the season (weather permitting). Cutting the bottom third of the field was postponed last year due to excessive moisture in the soil and will hopefully happen this year by KLT.

Our next meetings are scheduled for October 25, November 20 and December 18 at the Fire Station.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Simpson