



HALLOWELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, JAN 29 AT 6:30 PM
HALLOWELL FIRE STATION MEETING ROOM, COOS LANE

Minutes -Jan 26 monthly meeting was rescheduled to Jan 29 due to weather.
Members present: Hilary, Jacqueline, Rosemary, Jill, and Jean

1. No community guests nor public comments.
2. Established quorum with 4+ voting members in attendance.
3. Assign meeting secretary – Rosemary will draft minutes for January.
4. Agenda additions – Rosemary offered members extra copies of MEACC’s *Maine Conservation Commission Manual* and MNAP’s *Maine Invasive Plants Field Guide*
5. Consent agenda
 - a. Draft minutes 12/15/2025 – unanimously approved. Update on a past action item to create a list of known private property lots and owners that allow public access either by trails or other recreational activities; draft list is in progress.
6. HCC Member terms 2026 – Hilary is updating member terms to post correct information on city website.
7. Recreation Commission update – Jean shared the Commission did not meet in January, no updates.
8. Solar siting ordinance request. Members reviewed City Council’s January 2026 documents as background and the request to HCC to draft Hallowell’s Solar Siting and Battery Storage ordinance. Members discussed ideas of numerous reviews of the draft ordinance potentially including a KVCOG planner and local industry experts to complement reference and supporting documents from neighboring communities, non-profits, and the State. Changes and impacts to existing Hallowell City Ordinances, especially local zoning permitted and conditional uses need to be reviewed.

Solar Ordinance Plan as of Jan 29:

- **Hilary** will create a shared drive containing solar ordinance guidance and models and relevant sections from City zoning ordinances
 - **Maureen** and **Jacqueline** will take lead on draft
 - Expect HCC draft to be completed by March 31; reviews external to HCC would then ensue.
9. Communications updates
 - a. E-news – HCC Winter edition posted on Jan 18. We still need a more efficient way of maintaining distribution email list and signups.
 - **Rosemary** will discuss with City Clerk the possibility of using the City’s Constant Contact application.
 - b. Spring Champion – Articles are due by the end of Feb for mid-March publication. Planned articles: “What Does Your Conservation Commission Do?”; “HCA Happenings”
 - **Hilary** will send draft of article 1 to HCC for review
 - **Hilary** will send upcoming HCC/HCA events to Bob for community calendar listng

- c. Web site – Jill has worked with City Clerk’s office to update HCC online presence on City of Hallowell website to include logo and social media links; older content (such as RTCA folder) can now be moved to Recreation Commission folder. Ongoing effort to keep information current and relevant.
10. HCC Accounting – Members reviewed needs for rest of fiscal year; expect to be within budget allocation. Reminder HCC is still holding budget line item for Recreation Commission
 - **Hilary** will work with Councilor Knox on possibly using balance for invasive effort at RES in Mar/Apr timeframe.
11. City Council discussions on engaging Hall-Dale students in civic affairs – FYI to HCC and how best to engage students aligned with HCC activities – capstone projects, park and open space volunteer days, watershed efforts, etc. Members would enthusiastically welcome student engagement.
12. Invasive plant controls at the RES – Next step includes scheduling Harold Burnett of Two Tree Forestry for an onsite visit, including volunteers, in Mar/Apr timeframe to possibly help find and guide on how best to manage and control invasives; Harold has a \$96/hr. professional fee. In addition, 2014 documents were found from Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) staff documenting locations and species of invasive plants throughout the RES. Goal is to develop a plan based on Harold’s input & the 2014 reports to prioritize efforts and engage volunteers in removal and restoration efforts. Hilary is in contact with Harold.
13. Effie Berry restoration planning for 2026. Based on the removal of invasives over the past 6 years and the most recent extensive efforts, there is enough open soil and open canopy to start a restoration effort near pond. Rosemary and community volunteers have developed a planting list based on work at area land trusts, MOFGA, and locally at the Granite City Park riverfront. Request to HCC for reimbursement of an estimated cost of \$500 for 2026 planting season. Native trees (including one species towards assisted migration), shrubs, and perennials are planned to shade out young invasive plants, benefit wildlife, support pollinators, deter erosion, and enhance user experience. Manual extraction of invasives is continuing this winter.
14. Maine Big Night – early planning for Spring; Hilary is investigating a section of road in Hallowell to register on Maine Big Night site for 2026. Volunteers will be needed to monitor.
15. Upcoming HCC Monthly meetings 2/23; 3/16(decide if April 20 meeting a go/no go); 5/18.

Submitted by – R. Presnar