

North Yarmouth Parks and Recreation Committee

*October 6, 2021,
Wescustogo Community Center*

Minutes

Present: Bob Abbott (chair), Steve Palmer, Scott Kerr, Elise Kern, Kim Merrill, Laurie Gilman. Ted Danforth absent.

- I. Call to order 6:31pm**
- II. Minutes Approval**
All present approved September minutes
- III. New Business**
 1. Ag Allies presentation – Maeve McGowan, KELT and Ag Allies
 - a. Maeve presented on the Bobolinks present at Chandler Brook (Bobolink is a ground-laying member of the black bird family, long distance migrants that winter in South America). Savannah sparrows also present, a short distance migrant. Both birds are ground-laying in open fields and will remain in their nests until people/predators are very nearby. Nesting period for both species is May to August. At Chandler Brook specifically, enriching the soil with Lime (spring) and fertilizer (fall) will bolster health of native grasses so they may outperform invasive species currently present, better grasses will be better environment for birds. Recommend to always wait until July 15th at the earliest to do any haying. Chandler Brook appears to have a large and thriving population of Bobolinks, and Ag Allies would like to have it be one of the demonstration sites going forward due to high visibility and ability of North Yarmouth to provide a public education platform for conservation efforts. Ag Allies highly enthusiastic about a partnership with a municipality like North Yarmouth. Ag Allies would recommend offering information session options in the winter (lecture, webinar, etc) and then placing signage in May advising of presence. Committee is in receipt of draft proposal from Ag Allies about process and timing, committee will review and inform Maeve of next steps. Draft proposal notes that Ag Allies will pay for recommended materials and therefore create no additional cost to North Yarmouth. Maeve contact info: mmcgowan@kennebecestuary.org

Committee discussed proposal and recommended sharing with the Select Board and recommend its support. Motion to support presenting it to the Select Board was made and passed unanimously. Steve & Laurie to take ownership of advocating for policy with Select Board. Recommend to put on Select Board agenda for early November meeting and including Maeve as presenter.

2. Hunting in parks and preserves

Chandler Brook, Hayes Forest, Old Townhouse and Knight's Pond allow for hunting on the lands. Currently lack of consistent signage. Limited signage present at the Town Forest loop. Parks have differing levels of hunting permissions (some require written permission). Signage should include rules (seasons, specific permission requirements, etc). Committee discussed whether signage should be permanent (informing of entire season) and/or seasonal signage posted at the start of each season. Laurie also noted that North Yarmouth park webpages are inconsistent in their information as to whether hunting is or isn't allowed.

Scott Kerr made motion to purchase and install signage immediately as hunting season is currently underway, motion passed.

3. Baston Park - trees

Concerns expressed about Emerald Ash Borer potential threat given high presence of Ash trees present at this location. At this time, committee will continue to monitor as existing solutions are costly.

IV. Old Business

1. Chandler Brook invasive plants

Current grant applications are for OTHP and Eleanor Hayes Town Forest, Chandler Brook not currently included. Committee has some funds budgeted for this that could be applied. Scott reminded committee that even with grant funds requested for other locations, these may not cover entire costs but instead provide 50% of funds required. Scott recommended asking Clark Baston whether he can remove invasives at Chandler using mechanical means to remove Honeysuckle in multiple places. Scott to discuss with Clark for feasibility.

2. Dedication plaques at park entrances

As alternative to allowing benches in parks to memorialize people/pets, committee discussing memorial plaques at park entrances. Kim researching some options to share with the committee. Laurie recommended that if we are to consider this, we can consider existing guidelines in other cities.

3. Monitoring program

Dedicated email address for Parks and Recreation committee has now been created (nyprc@northyarmouth.org) and is the requested

destination for monitor reports as well as public commentary about NY parks.

V. Round Robin

Scott – currently lack of signage at Eleanor Hayes Town Forest on Oak Hill that identifies name of park. Committee agrees that presence of signage would be appropriate.

VI. Next meeting: *November 3, 2021*

VII. Adjournment 8:55pm