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**By Darlene Brady at 11:00 am, May 18, 2023**

**TOWN OF KENT**  
Conservation Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023 @ 7:00pm

In attendance:  
Liddy Baker  
Melissa Cherniske  
Carol Franken  
Connie Manes  
Wendy Murphy  
Jos Spelbos  
First Selectman Jean Speck

Members of the Public Attending:  
Lynn Worthington  
Lynn Harrington

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Call to order

1. A quorum being present, Commission Chair Connie Manes called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.
2. Accept/Amend Agenda. *Upon a motion by Melissa Cherniske seconded by Liddy Baker, the Commissioners voted unanimously to accept the agenda.*
3. Accept/amend minutes of Regular Meeting April 19, 2023. The minutes were amended to fix numbering typos at paragraphs 7 and 8. In the section subheaded "Legislative Watch List" the minutes were amended to clarify that Jennifer Heaton Jones encouraged the Commissioners to reach out to Rep. Maria Horn with support for the EPR for tires bill. *Upon a motion by Melissa seconded by Liddy, the minutes of the April 19, 2023 Regular Meeting were unanimously approved as amended.*
4. Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Liddy Baker reported that the Commission had \$996.01 in expenses over the last month, leaving \$1,229.36 within our 22-23 budget. Carol has an additional reimbursement requests. The balance of the Kuga Fund is \$10,940.84. We have 60 Trails Books available for sale.
5. Public Comment. No comments.
6. Old Business.  
*Discussion items*
  - A. Right to Farm Ordinance Revision.  
The Commissioners discussed suggested revisions to the Right To Farm Ordinance for the purpose of clarifying when and how it should be used for the protection of farms and farmers against nuisance claims. *The Commissioners considered and rejected proposing the repeal or rescission of the Ordinance. Connie will make edits in accordance with the discussion and circulate to the Commission for further discussion and possible approval in a Special Meeting to be scheduled. Following approval by commissioners the suggested revisions will be sent to Town Counsel for review.*

The Commissioners discussed with First Selectman Jean Speck her options for issuing an opinion in the current matter before the Selectmen; *all agreed it would be most appropriate to deliver an opinion that*

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*the activities in the complaint are not nuisances, based on the Town's lack of any regulation, ordinance or mechanism for deeming activities nuisances.*

B. Town Clean-Up Debrief.

The Commissioners discussed the Town Clean-up including participants' observations that there is far less trash on the roads than there has been in the past. The majority of roadside trash consists of beer cans and liquor "nips", presumably tossed from cars to remove evidence of drinking while driving. Trash is heavier on heavily-used roads that people don't walk on – such as Routes 7 and 341.

The Commissioners discussed ways to increase participation and streamline the Clean-Up in the future. Ideas included: setting up a table by the IGA to register people, using social media to solicit volunteers, having a unique "day" for the Clean-Up as is done in other towns, and using google forms for sign-ups and tracking participation. *Next year the Commission will take advantage of the free bags, gloves and vests provided by HRRRA. Participants love the cakes from Costco, so we will continue that part of the program.*

*Connie will send Jean a copy of the thank you card distributed to volunteers, for sharing out in the Town eNews. Wendy will write a letter to Costco management thanking them for their personal service.*

C. Kent Municipal Open Space Acquisition. Tabled.

D. Sustainable Materials Management in Kent – PAYT and Organics Recycling.

This pilot program will now be called "SAYT" for "Save As You Throw". The Town held a public meeting last Friday about the program. Jennifer Heaton Jones presented with DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes attending as a special guest. About 25 people attended and asked questions. A second meeting will be held on June 13<sup>th</sup> by zoom. The program is on track to be implemented beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Updates*

E. POCD.

The Planning and Zoning Commission will meet tomorrow to review revisions to Regulations (including Conservation Subdivision Regulations) subsequent to the public meeting last month. At the request of Land Use Administrator Tai Kern Jos submitted written comments following his oral comments during the meeting.

F. KCS Arbor Day Celebration.

Jos reported the Arbor Day celebration took place on a beautiful day. KCS students and faculty enjoy this annual tradition. The Scarlet Oak was slightly more expensive than our trees have been in the past – prices have increased. Rick Osborne will ensure the tree is watered.

During the event Bruce Bennett asked Jos and Connie for the Commission's help in getting more street trees in the Village.

G. Green Energy Task Force.

Wendy reported that PACE is working on aggregating and centralizing staff support for energy initiatives within the COGs.

Wendy will have information about green energy and how to conserve energy available at the Commission's table during the Kent Land Trust Community Picnic on Memorial Day.

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- H. Housatonic Herbicide Working Group (HHWG). No update.
  - I. Sustainable CT. Jean is working to jumpstart this effort.
  - J. Legislative Watch List:  
The Commission reviewed the list of environmental bills including some which may move forward this session.
7. New Business
- A. KLT Picnic Participation.  
Wendy, Carol and Liddy will attend the Kent Land Trust Community Picnic and sell Trails Books (\$15) as well as provide information on Green Energy and SAYT. Wendy can bring her tent. Mike Benjamin is available to help set up the tent + tables at 9am but is unavailable to be at the picnic until shortly after noon. The tables should be set up by 10:30 and the picnic runs from 11 to 1pm. Mike will have information on KLT's Exploration Challenge available as well as props such as walking sticks.
8. Correspondence. None.
9. Adjourn. There being no further business before the Commission and upon the motion of Wendy seconded by Liddy the meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

*NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Wednesday June 14<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm*

Respectfully submitted by: Connie Manes, Chair

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