

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025

The meeting, held at the Rec. Center Pavillion, was called to order by Patrick Calecas at 5:36 p.m.

Attendance: Marielle Ambroch, Patrick Calecas, Joan Hildreth, Lynn Locher (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), Matt Paggi, Kip Potter

Absent: Charles Snedikor

Visitor(s): Cliff Loos

Additions/Changes to Agenda: Additions: MCC communication in between meetings; Town Forest Census request - status

Approval of Minutes 05/07/25 – Kip made a motion to approve the minutes; Marielle seconded. After a brief discussion, all present voted in favor of approving the 05/07/25 minutes. Motion passed.

Budget/CD Update/Treasurer's Report – No recent update. As of 01/13/25: CD balance of \$78,017.94, maturing on 6/16/25; checking account balance of \$11,794.22. Patrick plans to find out the amount of a recent donation to the MCC.

Events/Projects – Planned:

Two planned workshops led by Elliot Cluba:

“Natural Navigation” – Wednesday, June 18th, 5 – 7 p.m. at Town Land and

“Reading the Landscape” – Wednesday, August 20th, 5 – 7 p.m. at the Lochers’ land The Bakersfield, Enosburg, and Richford Conservation Commissions (CCs) are interested in co-sponsoring both events with the MCC. After discussion, Joan made a motion to use 100% of the proceeds from the generous donation to the MCC from the Montgomery Center for the Arts (MCA) via the Play Every Town Event they had hosted in March to defray the cost of the workshops, with the balance due being divided evenly between the four CCs. Marielle seconded, and the motion passed. Joan will let the other CCs know about the cost. Kip shared a draft flyer he had developed for the events and all agreed that it looks great. He plans to include additional information based on the discussion and input provided at the meeting. Once finalized, it will be shared with the other CCs and distributed through social media, around Town to businesses/offices, and via the Listserv.

Proposed/Discussion/Updates:

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) – Joan reported that the MCC was not awarded the grant, but constructive feedback was provided by the AVCC in their letter of denial. Patrick reported that there was no update re: the AVCC Needs Assessment.

Town Forest (TF) – Bridge Design/Funding –Matt reported that there was no update. Tabled for now.

Town Land (TL) – Mowing, etc. - Volunteer Day for Pulling/Digging Knotweed – Kip suggested that it would be helpful to set a date relatively soon for this, after the first mowing of the season has occurred, and all agreed. The volunteer day will be Saturday, 7/12 at 9:00 a.m., with a rain date of 7/19 at the same time. **Status of Mowing** – There has been no mowing yet due to an equipment issue which is expected to be resolved soon. **Longterm Management Plan for TL** -. Matt and Kip raised this topic. After discussion, all readily agreed that it would be valuable to have such a plan for the property. Kip plans to make some inquiries about individuals/organizations that do this type of work, and Matt plans to ask Charlie Hancock if he has any ideas.

Knotweed Project (KP) – Grant Update - Kip reported that he has completed the final Work Plan and is in process of completing the QA plan, hoping to have a draft of it within the next few weeks. Because the EPA in Boston has to approve QA Plans, and that process can take a number of months, he indicated that it made sense to push the project timeline back. It now has a September of 2029 end date. It could be possible to do some of the preliminary work on the project in the fall, but most of it is expected to get underway in the spring of 2026. Everyone expressed appreciation for all of the work Kip has done, and that he will continue to do, on this project. Lynn brought up the importance of making sure that responsibilities are shared, that they do not fall mainly on Kip. All agreed. Cliff raised the possibility of utilizing the services of high school students for this, as well as other projects, as part of their community service requirements. All agreed that this is a great idea and is worth pursuing.

MCC Membership Updates/Opening – Cliff Loos is expected to officially become a member of the MCC following a vote at the 6/16/25 Selectboard meeting. Everyone appreciates Cliff's willingness to join the MCC. An additional opening remains as well. If there are members of the Montgomery community who would be interested in serving on the MCC, inquiries are very much welcome. The MCC e-mail address is: MontgomeryConservation@gmail.com

Logo Design Project– Lynn plans to follow up with Sandy Alexander at the MES re: the status of the project.

Tree and Plaque for MES 2025 Graduating Class – Kip has been taking care of the cherry tree which the FCNRCD kindly provided for the graduates until it is planted. Marielle made a motion, seconded by Lynn, to spend up to \$55.00 for a plaque for the tree. Motion passed. The plaque will have the following inscription: *Montgomery Conservation Commission to MES Class of 2025 Graduates – "All of our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."* - Walt Disney It should be noted that the quote was selected by the MES students. Lynn plans to check with Sandy re: the day/time for planting. It will likely be either 6/9 or 6/10.

Farmer's Market – Patrick has the forms which are required for participation. After discussion, all agreed that the MCC should plan to have a table there on 7/26, 8/23, and 9/27.

Raffle - After discussion, Joan made a motion to spend up to \$10.00 on a roll of raffle tickets which can be ordered by Erin, the Town Treasurer. It was agreed that raffle

tickets would be sold at the Farmer's Market, with a drawing in the fall. The means of promotion will include social media and the Listserv. Further discussion of additional details about the raffle, as well as other ways to promote it, will occur at the July meeting.

Ideas for Future MCC Projects - Bird Houses for TL – Joan raised the idea of a collaborative project (perhaps with MCA, MES, other community members) to identify the types of bird houses which would be appropriate for the TL and then to build and install them. All agreed this could be a good project for 2026. Matt offered to speak with a local master bird house builder about the idea as well. **Trail Camera(s) for TF/TL** - Joan shared about a project which the RCC is doing with trail cameras, and raised the idea of the MCC procuring some cameras for placement in promising locations in the TF (and perhaps the TL). Photos/videos of wildlife which are captured could then be shared with community members in various ways. All agreed that this would be a worthwhile project. The hope is that there will be grant opportunities in the future to assist with the purchase of the camera(s).

Town Forest Census - Matt reported that he had contacted Matt Fischetti, a researcher working on the Vermont Town Forest Census project at UVM, re: his request for the MCC to complete a Town Forest Census form for the project, but he has not yet received a response.

MCC Communications In Between Meetings – Joan raised a question about the most effective way for MCC members to communicate with one another when issues which require time-sensitive attention arise between scheduled meetings. After discussion, all agreed that e-mail remains the best option at this time, and that it would be helpful to indicate on e-mails if responses are time-sensitive.

Marielle made a motion, seconded by Kip, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth