

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Carissa Stein at 5:34 p.m. via Zoom. Attendance: Susan Baker, Charlie Hancock, Joan Hildreth, Parma Jewett, Lynn Locher, Matt Paggi, Carissa Stein, Sue Wilson. Absent: Misty McCartney. Visitor(s): John Kuryloski

Additions/Deletions to Agenda – Sue W. requested adding discussion re: ECHO Ctr. idea Minutes from September 2, 2020 – Sue W. made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Susan. Charlie abstained due to not having been at the September meeting. The other seven members in attendance voted to approve; motion passed.

Welcome Visitors/Potential New Members/Other Membership Changes – John Kuryloski attended, was welcomed, and expressed interest in joining. Charlie moved that the MCC recommend to the Selectboard that John join the MCC; seconded by Joan. The motion passed unanimously. Rissa will send John a copy of the Bylaws. Misty is stepping down from the MCC at this time and will be sending in her official notice regarding this.

Treasurer's Report – Sue W. reported, as of 10/7/2020, balance is \$88,965.02. Included are funds from the following: 126 mums sold - profit \$218; 38 calendars sold for \$570.00; Sue sold additional calendar for \$20.00; new MCC supporter contributed \$100.00. Sue also reported that Erin K. will open \$75K (6 month) CD this month. Parma moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Joan. Motion passed unanimously.

Planned Events/Projects:

- **Town Forest Visit/Management Plan/Management of Forest** – Matt coordinated visit to forest on 9/16 with others from MCC (Susan B., Charlie, Joan and Parma). Charlie led a walk and discussion of ideas re: the forest. A parking area was identified and possible forest management practices and uses of the property were discussed. (At this meeting, Matt shared a photo of a very large squirrel cone midden, one of quite a few discovered on the walk.) Charlie will send everyone on the MCC the old Forest Management Plan (FMP). He also offered to update the FMP by next spring for review. Sue offered to research the history of the property as well as the contact info of abutting property owners in Montgomery. Parma offered to obtain contact info for Enosburg abutters. All of that info will be forwarded to Matt. There was also discussion re: possible funding sources for work done on the Town Forest. Carissa agreed to explore eligibility for NRCS sources. Rise VT could be another possibility. There was also discussion re: the importance of public input as well as presentation of plans as the process proceeds.
- **MCC Calendars** -Parma has orders for 10 more and 6 are available for sale at Lutz's. There was discussion re: whether or not to sell any additional ones. Parma expressed her willingness to print and compile, and it was decided to extend the order deadline to 11/15. Carissa will make a flyer. Joan will share flyer on the MCC Facebook page and Front Porch Forum.

Discussion:

- **Water Quality Improvements Along the Trout River Trail** – Lynn reported that she spoke to a local VAST member, but that person was no longer involved with leadership of the local club. Joan then contacted one of the other Franklin County VAST clubs but has not heard back and she still needs to follow-up with them as well as another local member. Joan will also compile a list of contact info for landowners along the trail. Carissa offered to compose a letter to be sent to them once the contact info is available.
- **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)**– With the approval of the Selectboard and Planning Commission, Carissa and Amanda from Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), completed and submitted the grant proposal by the 9/30 deadline. Carissa shared the Work Plan and Budget at this meeting, and she explained that \$22K was requested and the MCC would have to put in a minimum of 10%. It is a competitive grant and notification is expected in December of 2020. Carissa reviewed some of the details of the requirements of the grant as well as the process involved in compiling the inventory. She offered to again forward to other MCC members the e-mail from Amanda with examples of the foci of the inventory. The inventory would be a living document which can change over time as appropriate.
- **Library Collaboration, Discovery Backpacks, Conservation Corner, Bulletin Board** – Tabled. Library remains closed. Carissa looking into the backpacks and will explore possible grant(s) including through Rise VT.
- **Riparian Planting** – Carissa suggested having a workshop in the spring of 2021 at a local property which was impacted by flooding. She will check with Lindsey Wight from MRBA re: collaboration on this. All agreed with this.
- **Watershed Planning Grants** – Carissa reported that there could be grants available through NRPC and offered to invite Amanda to the next MCC meeting to discuss. All agreed this would be very helpful.
- **ECHO Center** – Because Kurt Valenta will not be able to do on-line presentations, Sue W. looked into other options and shared info re: the ECHO Center's Virtual STEM Academy for elementary school aged children. She has discussed the idea with staff at the Montgomery Elementary School as well. All agreed that it sounded great. Sue has a call into ECHO for further info, including any costs involved. After discussion, Carissa moved that Sue continue to pursue this, and that the MCC pre-approve up to \$500.00 for any costs of the program. If it does not cost anything, then the MCC could donate up to \$100.00 to the ECHO Center. Parma seconded. Passed unanimously.
- **MES Trail/Outdoor Classroom** – Charlie obtained the services of Kevin Conneely to cut trees for clean-up and for the safety of the area, and it is in use by the MES. Kevin did this at no cost. After discussion, Sue W. moved that the MCC purchase a \$50.00 gift certificate to the Belfry to be given to Kevin as a thank you. Joan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Charlie made a motion, seconded by Parma, to adjourn at 6:49 p.m. Passed unanimously.
Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth