

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 06, 2024

The meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by Carissa Stein at 5:40 p.m.

Attendance: Marielle Ambroch, Susan Baker, Patrick Calecas, Joan Hildreth, Parma Jewett, Lynn Locher (arrived at 7:14), Carissa Stein. It should be noted that Marielle was welcomed to her first meeting as an official MCC member.

Absent: Matt Paggi

Visitors: Charles Snedikor

Additions/Deletions/Changes to the Agenda – Senior Luncheon presentation 3/18/24

Welcome Visitor: Charles visited today's meeting and expressed his interest in the MCC as a part of his desire to be active in the community. Carissa shared information re: the MCC and suggested that Charles could let us know if, after the meeting, he would be interested in becoming a member of the MCC.

Minutes 10/11/23 – After discussion, Patrick made a motion to approve the minutes, Parma seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously; the 10/11/23 minutes were approved.

Budget/CD Update, Treasurer's Report – Patrick provided a spreadsheet which everyone agreed was very helpful. He and others suggested that it would be helpful if expense and revenue categories could be more detailed. Patrick and/or Carissa agreed to discuss this with Erin, the Town Treasurer. Carissa gave an update on the status of the UMATR and Fruit/Nut grants, indicating that all of the deliverables had been met. Everyone expressed appreciation for all of her work on both. Susan made a motion to accept the budget report, seconded by Joan, and it passed unanimously.

Events/Projects:

Planned:

Montgomery Elementary School (MES) Wildlife Tracking Field Trip to Jewett Town Land with Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District

(FCNRCD) Friday, 3/8/24 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.- Plans are all set for this. Carissa had sent everyone the agenda for the day. Any members of the MCC who would like to participate are more than welcome to attend. The MCC's role will be a supportive one; FCNRCD will be in charge of the event along with the MES. All agreed that this is a great opportunity for the MES students.

Total Solar Eclipse Information with Dan Seeley, Sunday, 3/10/24 at 2:00 p.m. at the Richford Town Hall – A Zoom option is available for those unable to attend in person. Co-sponsored by the Richford, Enosburg and Montgomery Conservation Commissions and the A. A. Brown Public Library.

The FCNRCD's Flood Resilience and Hazard Mitigation Study Kickoff Meeting, Monday, 3/18/24 at 5:00 p.m. at the PSB Conference Room– Carissa reported that this

will be an opportunity for community input about the study which is being overseen by FCNRCD and the Selectboard, with the MCC providing a supportive role.

Gardening for Pollinators Presentation by Marijke Niles of Perennial Pleasures, Tuesday, 4/2/24 at 6:00 p.m. at the Richford High School Library – The total cost is \$200.00 (\$150.00 plus \$50.00 for mileage). RCC has committed to the event and ECC is considering doing so as well. All agreed that this sounds like a great event and, after discussion, Joan made a motion to authorize up to \$100.00 for the MCC's share of the cost, Susan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. To clarify, if RCC and MCC are the only co-sponsors, MCC's share would be half of the \$200.00 total (\$100.00). If ECC joins in co-sponsoring the cost would be split evenly 3 ways.

Green Up Day (GUD), Saturday, 5/4/24, based at the PSB Parma and Jackie have agreed to coordinate the event again this year. Parma is trying to enlist the help of some high school seniors for that day. She is also contacting the State to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of bags and gloves. Parma and Jackie offered to provide homemade baked goods and supply beverages for the event. All agreed that this would be wonderful. Joan made a motion to authorize \$100.00 for the food/drinks for GUD, Patrick seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

FCNRCD Tree Sale Pick-Up, Saturday, 5/4/24 at PSP 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Carissa, Matt and Patrick all offered to coordinate pick-up/delivery again this year, which everyone very much appreciates.

Proposed/Discussion/Updates:

Thank You to Three MCC Members Who Resigned– John Kuryloski, Karen Stanley, and Sue Wilson have all resigned from the MCC. There was discussion about the important roles each of them has played over the years as dedicated MCC members. Everyone wishes to express deep gratitude to them; their presence on the commission will be sorely missed.

Coordination with Montgomery Center for the Arts (MCA) – The idea of collaborating/coordinating with the MCA was raised. After discussion, Joan agreed to contact Melissa Haberman from the MCA to invite her to attend the MCC's April meeting, if possible, in order to discuss this further with her.

MES Graduation Gift of Tree/Plaque– It should be noted that this has become an annual tradition. After discussion, all agreed that it would be nice to give the graduating students the opportunity to choose the kind of tree to be planted as well as the quote for the accompanying plaque. Carissa made a motion to authorize up to \$150.00 for the tree and plaque, Patrick seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Fund (CF) Application– It was reported that a Montgomery landowner is interested in applying for funding. This would be the first such request from the Town's CF. Carissa reviewed the process for applying/approval/denial. At this point, there is no application form yet, and this will need to be developed. Carissa offered to check with the Enosburg CC about their application process and the forms they use. All agreed this would be helpful.

Town Forest (TF) Next Steps–

Matt was unable to attend the meeting but reported that he had two additional potential contractors to contact. Patrick shared that he had a list of trail contractors that he had also given to Matt. Everyone appreciates the time and effort Matt has put into this, and

Patrick, too. There was discussion about the idea of moving forward with trail work which could relatively easily be done just by volunteers (marking, raking, moving sticks/other debris in paths, lopping, etc.) The main focus for a contractor could then be the bridge for the stream crossing and perhaps any other more challenging sections of trail construction, if needed. All agreed that this could be a worthwhile approach.

Solar Eclipse, Monday, 4/8/24 (3:25 – 3:30 p.m.) – Many local events are planned.

Possible Future Presenters:

Nate Nourse – Parma offered to send a link to everyone about his website which identifies areas of expertise such as pollinators, berries, etc. Everyone agreed that a presentation by him and/or involvement in the Jewett Town Land project should be considered.

Elliot Cluba – Joan shared about a recent Wildlife Tracking workshop which Elliot did at the MCA as well as other upcoming workshops Elliot will be doing there (Herbal Alchemy, Family Fire Skills). After discussion, it was agreed that Joan would contact him about any other workshops/presentations he offers which would be of interest.

Additional Topic:

Senior Luncheon, Monday 3/18/24 at 11:30 a.m. Parma asked if anyone would be interested in doing a 15-minute presentation about the MCC for those who attend the Town's senior luncheon. Carissa agreed to do the presentation.

Patrick made a motion, seconded by Susan, to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth