

**CHARLESTOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**March 26, 2013**  
**CHARLESTOWN TOWN HALL**  
**4540 S. County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813**

- I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:04PM by L. Arnold, Chair.
- II. ROLL CALL: Present: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger, F. Safford and R. Thieke. Excused: K. Simoneau .
- III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS: L. Arnold introduced Deborah Carney, Stephen Eaves, John Lovey and Jennifer Sternick who would like to be considered for membership on the Tree Committee.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  
Motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2013 by G. Klinger. 2<sup>nd</sup>: H. Hultgren.  
Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger and R. Thieke. Nay: None.  
Abstain: F. Safford.
- V. OLD BUSINESS:
  1. Tree Committee
    - a. R. Thieke reviewed the duties and authority of the Tree Committee and also the comments of the Town solicitor, Peter Ruggiero, namely that “the Tree subcommittee is a product of the Conservation Commission. Because the ordinance is ambiguous and there is no other guidance, the Conservation Commission appoints the subcommittee. The subcommittee can’t do policy, can’t issue directives and they have to report to the Conservation Commission. They have no independent authority or power.”
    - b. There was a general discussion of the responsibilities of National Grid versus the Town Public Works Dept. The idea of the guests at the meeting was to appoint a tree committee to raise awareness and to get a tree warden for the Town. The four tree committee candidates all indicated that they did not have any expertise regarding trees and it was strongly suggested that they consider taking a course offered by the RI Tree Council before further consideration of their applications would be made. Concern was expressed by commissioners that if we have a Committee that identifies trees that may be hazardous and we do not have a tree warden, there is a potential liability to the Town if they are not promptly removed so it appears that a tree warden, even on a part-time or retainer basis, is needed before a committee is appointed.
    - c. H. Hultgren will obtain and disseminate information regarding the RI Tree Council educational program.
    - d. Motion by G. Klinger to direct L. Arnold to approach the Town budget Committee about the feasibility of getting some monies for a tree warden placed in the next fiscal budget. 2<sup>nd</sup>: R. Thieke. Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger and R. Thieke. Nay: F. Safford.
    - e. The candidates expressed the following reasons for their interest in joining the Tree Committee: D. Carney and J. Sternick for increased awareness, J. Lovoy for concerns that trees that do not necessarily come down are being taken down and S. Eaves due to concerns about tree maintenance and power outages.
  2. Survey of tree damage along trails – confirmed that we will walk the trails at Richard Trails, South Farm and Schoolhouse Pond on April 6 beginning at 8:30 at Richard Trails to assess damage and to plan for removal of obstacles.
  3. Richard Trails - C. Connery, G. Klinger and H. Hultgren will try to arrange a mutually convenient date to work on Richard Trails first trail in the hopes of having it open to the public soon.
  4. Nick Wollenberg Eagle Scout Project – L. Arnold reported that Nick has been told he has until May 15<sup>th</sup> to complete the project and that he should give us 10 days notice of when he plans to do it so that F. Safford can arrange to get him the supplies.

5. Lawn Mower at South Farm – Motion by H. Hultgren to authorize spending up to \$150 to have the lawnmower serviced. 2<sup>nd</sup>: F. Safford. Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger, F. Safford and R. Thieke. Nay: None.
6. Arbor Day Celebration – April 26 at Charlestown Elementary School from 1:00 to 3:00 PM – The plan is to explain briefly what Arbor Day is all about, then plant a tree at the School and then distribute to all the 4<sup>th</sup> graders and their teachers two blue spruce seedlings along with instructions on planting. Motion by C. Connery to spend \$108.95 to obtain 150 blue spruce seedlings (6 to 10 inches in height) from the Arbor Day Foundation. 2<sup>nd</sup>: H. Hultgren. Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger, F. Safford and R. Thieke. Nay: None. Motion by G. Klinger to spend \$48 to purchase from Schartner Farms a 3 to 4 foot blue spruce tree to plant at the elementary school. 2<sup>nd</sup>: H. Hultgren. Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger, F. Safford and R. Thieke. Nay: None.
7. Well Water Protection Workshop: G. Klinger reported that this workshop sponsored by the Conservation Commission has been arranged for May 1<sup>st</sup> from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Cross Mills Library. The URI Cooperative Extension and RI Dept. of Health will offer the workshop on private well water protection. Posters and flyers will be distributed and it will also be listed on the Town website. L. Arnold said Matt Dowling will link his request to receive copies of test results from anyone testing the water from their private well.
8. Land and Water Conservation Summit Reports – tabled

VI. NEW BUSINESS: None.

VII. MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by H. Hultgren to adjourn. 2<sup>nd</sup>: C. Connery. Aye: L. Arnold, C. Connery, H. Hultgren, G. Klinger, F. Safford and R. Thieke. Nay: None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard N. Thieke  
Secretary

Next regular Commission meeting will be held on April 23, 2013

Next special Commission meeting will be on April 6, 2013 starting at Richard Trails at 8:30 AM.