

# Sherman Conservation Commission

Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

Mallory Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.

DRAFT

**Members Present:** Joanna Wozniak, Chair, Bill McCann, and Patricia Bailey

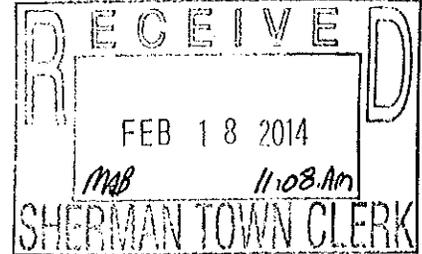
**Public & Invited:** Suzan Williams & John Foley

**Also Present:** Christine Branson, Commission Clerk

This meeting was audio recorded.

**Call to Order:**

J. Wozniak Called the Meeting to Order at 7:05 p.m.



**Business:**

## Happy Acres

The Commission discussed the results of a Town Meeting held on February 7<sup>th</sup>, in which the attendees voted overwhelmingly in favor of approving appropriation of funding in the amount of \$64,000.00 to be used in FY 2014 for purposes of covering costs of Attorney fees, the Ad Hoc Committee Clerk and other various operational costs related to the Farm. The BoS has stated they will be moving quickly toward the RFP process. To date the Ad Hoc Committee has not made any official recommendations to the BoS as to what the intentions of the farm for the future. Chair, J. Wozniak spoke on behalf of the Outreach Committee (a sub-committee of the Happy Acres Ad Hoc Committee) stating the BoS has not expressed their vision for the Farm to the Committee as of yet. Discussion followed in reference to farm equipment already on the farm as well as the proper timing for requests for proposals. The Town Meeting also gave the opportunity for the attendees to express their points of view on the future of the farm. Also discussed were potential types of programming that could be held at the farm such as organic vegetable farming, children's programs, and educational workshops. The Commission agreed they would like to preserve space for natural habitats to encourage wild birds and other animals and monitor and maintain any invasive species on the farm. There were questions in reference to if the Town would allow more than one type of farm activity at a time and if the housing would also allow more than a single tenant. Other topics discussed were: the National Diversity Data Base, requesting an environmental review from the Eastern Conservation District, determining the prime farmland, possible uses for manure, and organic compost. Discussion followed in reference to other types of wildlife conservation, such as cultivating certain plants that encourage honey bees, butterflies and other pollinators. P. Bailey said she has spoken to a man who is interested in installing kestrel boxes which would provide safe nesting and monitoring of fledglings. Kestrels are one of the birds affected from DDT that have not had a full come back. The Commission suggested Mrs. Bailey's friend write a proposal to the BoS and HAFC. Chair, Wozniak stated she would present a statement for the HAFC meeting next Wednesday addressing many of the items discussed.

## 2014 Activities

The Committee discussed events for this coming year. B. McCann provided several sample handouts for perusal to create a brochure for placement possibly at Mallory Town Hall and the Sherman Library. The Commission is hopeful to hold a few discussion groups at the library. The Commission would like to have a series of "Invasive Species Walks" tentatively scheduled to take place mid May and mid June to educate the public on different species of plants that have become problematic such as barberry, knotweed, garlic mustard, and others. They are hopeful to provide guest speakers and presentations during these events. Locations for these walks will include the area behind the school and the trail to the Town beach. Books proposed for discussion at the library included: Bringing Nature Home, The Art of Building a White Birch Canoe, Rambunctious Garden, Swamp Walkers Journal, Forested Landscape, and The History of Stonewalls. Additional events discussed: Happy Acres Open Farm Day, and a Bear Awareness Discussion.

### Leadership

The Commission briefly discussed the State of Connecticut Requirements for a Town Conservation Commission. B. McCann stated according to the State requirements, it was not necessary to have an official Chair. J. Wozniak stated she would like to step down as Chair. An option discussed in a previous meeting, where the position would rotate at a three month interval between members seems most appropriate at this time. J. Wozniak will stay on for the March meeting. B. McCann will assume April, May and June. C. Shulman will assume July, August and September.

### Adjournment:

B. McCann Adjourned the Meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully-submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Branson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Christine Branson, Commission Clerk  
February 19, 2014