

# Minutes of Town of Conway Open Space (OS) Committee Meeting

## Thursday, November 16, 2023 6 PM Town Office

Members In Attendance: Janet Chayes, Michele Turre, Mac McCoy, Aimee Anderson, Katie Clarke Waddell  
- **Joining for the discussion was** Cate McDonough from Pollinate Conway.

Meeting began at 6:10

**1. Approve Sept. 18, 2023 minutes** Moved and approved by present committee members.

**2. Pollinate Conway Town Center Gardens** (Library Island & Veterans' Park)

Discussion focused on how to organize support for ongoing development and maintenance for the new pollinator garden in Veterans' Park.

CPA funds can't be used for maintenance but the OS committee can use its funds for approved projects.

The Library island pollinator garden was launched in 2022. The OS committee had provided \$831 for plants and watering supplies in FY22 and \$116 in FY23.

Veterans' Park garden beds were prepped all by volunteer labor during the summer 2023, and installation will continue in 2024.

Pollinate Conway was approved by the CPA for a warrant in the next town meeting for a budget to cover cost of plants and materials and labor for installation. The next special town meeting is Dec. 9. (Funding approved by Town Meeting.)

For future maintenance, the garden club has been asked if they have funds to contribute, primarily for maintenance. They had funded labels previously. The budget for maintenance could be up to \$4,000 per year including funds to pay for a part-time employee.

### **Proposal 1:**

A move was made request an increase in the budget request to the Finance Committee of the town by \$1,000 per year to assist in coverage of cost of maintenance of both the Library and Veterans' Park garden beds. Unanimously approved. (Since discouraged by the Selectboard; hence not requested.)

### **Proposal 2:**

A move was made to approve spending from the Open Space budget of \$3,000 per year towards maintenance of the two garden areas. Unanimously approved.

**3. Potential New Open Space Preservation Project**

The 136 acre church camp property on Roaring Brook Road has been put on the market for \$735,000. It's contiguous with South Deerfield reservoir watershed property. Open Space was contacted by the Acadia-based Audubon who was working with South Deerfield reservoir about the possibility of partnering in a purchase for preservation. Committee agreed to organize an exploratory walk (and to invite selectmen and members of other committees?).

Mac volunteered to call the relator for a walk on Dec. 3, at 10:30a.m.

**4. Covered Bridge Area Habitat Restoration**

Invasives have taken over 1.5-2 acres of land at the entrance to the bridge along 116. Overgrowth has blocked the millstone sign that welcomes drivers to Conway.

The Select Board endorsed the development of a grant proposal to clear and restore the land.

A tentative date for committee members to review the property was scheduled for the late morning of Dec. 3 following the walk at the church camp property on Roaring Brook Road.

## 5. Winter Program, Proposed for a Sunday Afternoon in Late February

Committee members brainstormed about program options...

- “Who is visiting the Town’s Open Spaces?”
- “Conway Wildlife Story Slam”
  - o Ask select townspeople to share photographs, scat examples, and stories about examples of wildlife that are active in Conway.
    - Moose, bear, butterfly, etc.
  - o Some people of interest: Mark Fortier

## 6. Bigelow Meadow Status

Mac will contact Owen Wormser to ask about the status of cutting in the meadow, and for his suggestions for a go-slow approach. The initial steps would be to mow a general path to allow for a walk to inspect and assess next steps. A status update will be prepared for the abutters.

## 7. Updates/Continuing Issues

Budget: A detailed report on the town operating account; Small Cities grant and various Community Preservation projects was distributed. Funds are available for upcoming activities.

### **South River Walk/ Watershed Tour Saturday, November 18th at 1:00pm**

to RSVP: [bit.ly/southernriver123](http://bit.ly/southernriver123)

Funded by the Flood Mitigation Grant from the MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program).

**Next Meeting *Tentatively*** Scheduled for Jan. 10 at 6pm (since set for Jan. 9).

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:40pm**