



**Underhill Conservation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2024
In Person @ Town Hall & Virtual GoToMeeting**

Present: Karen McKnight, Betsy Chapek, Patrick Lamphere, Laurie Graham

Guests: Penny Miller

6:32pm Welcome and Adjustments to the Agenda

- Karen McKnight welcomes all to the special meeting of the Underhill Conservation Commission (rescheduled from March 11, 2024) and leads the in-person and virtual meeting.

6:35pm Public Comment: No discussion.

6:35pm Organizational Meeting

- Betsy nominates Karen for the Chair of the Conservation Commission. Laurie seconds. Approved by a 4-0 vote. Karen accepts the nomination to be chair.
- No nominations for Vice Chair. We will leave the position open until we find someone to fill.
- Secretary/Treasurer nomination. Betsy nominates Laurie. Patrick seconds. Approved by a 4-0 vote. Laurie accepts the nomination.

6:37 pm UCC Rules & Procedure

- The UCC voted on the Rules & Procedure last May. Laurie moves to adopt the rules of procedure and Betsy seconds. The document will have a change to the date at the top of the page. Approved by a vote of 4-0. The UCC will sign it in April and Karen will give it to the Selectboard.

6:45 pm Planning & Brainstorming Session, Events

- Laurie and Penny will work on creating a list of the top brainstormed items alongside with the Appendix B of the Town Plan for the Conservation Commission. We will look to make sure each section of the town plan is met in the items the UCC plans to do.
- Betsy has learned that Crane Brook has downed trees on many of the paths. [Karen will talk with the Rec Committee and talk to Brad regarding the downed trees](#); the road crew may be able to help with removal. There could be more downed trees on the trails. [Karen and Penny will walk the Crane Brook trails to look for downed trees and will take notes of downed trees on the pdf of the map](#). After the walk, we will talk about dates to do a clean up.
- Maeve Kim is interested in leading two birding events. One on May 11, hopefully seeing hawks. And another on September 7 or 8. Timing will be in the morning. Her partner Bernie Paquette would be happy to join in and do any kind of walk/talk, Betsy notes that he has a wealth of knowledge. Laurie asks if we can use Bird Diva event money for birding expenses and purchase binoculars for public use at these events. [Betsy will see if the DRML has any for public use](#).
- Other upcoming events include May 4 Green Up Day and UCC Plant Sale June 1.
- UCC would like to host another workshop on invasive species; jumping worms is a popular topic. Penny asks if Pat Sabalis, the master gardener whose expertise is invasive species, might be interested. [Karen will reach out to Pat](#). Penny will be presenting at the Vermont Association of Composting on April 29 on jumping worms. Jumping worm patrols, identify and manage. Discussion continues about the plant sale options and jumping worm.

7:28 Other Items

- Penny suggests adding standing line items on the agenda: Upcoming Events, Past Events, Mapping Committee, and Bullet Point for new business. She mentions that Sabina Ernst, head of the Jericho Conservation Commission emailed and is wondering if a video showing and Q&A with the town Tree Warden could be a joint Jericho/Underhill collaboration. It is called "Seeing the Forest For the Trees: Vermont's Working Landscape and Forest Economy." Penny will find out if there is a cost, the collaboration may just be for marketing and promoting.
- Logo and letterhead, interim logo; Betsy has a couple of ideas on the site that suggested. Canva. Betsy will collaborate with Penny on the logo. Penny shows examples of the UCC letterhead with a banner that could be used for the May 11 bird outing.
- Patrick discusses events led by the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum that involve agriculture, farming, dancing. Discussion continues about the trees available through the homestead, collaborative events and potentially filming events with MMCTV. John Connell and/or Mary Hill participate or help with the open art studio, Betsy can reach out to John Connell or Mary Hill. Pat also has heirloom seeds for distribution, varieties of corn, squash and penobscot pumpkins. It could be in conjunction with the plant sale, but many of them should have been planted by then; some things have short germination time.
- At the Town Meeting, many people signed up saying they were interested in the UCC. Penny noticed an enthusiastic 7th grade student signed up who is passionate about the outdoors. Other folks are really interested in particular aspects of conservation; one on natural burials and another on beavers. She was wondering if the UCC might want to get involved in Corbett Road as some excavating has been done around a Beaver Deceiver that is not working correctly. Discussion continues, and Betsy will send out the volunteer emails and we will follow up. Laurie suggests adding it to the greater list of past volunteers to email everyone a short newsletter this spring.

8:10 pm Approval of Minutes

- Betsy moves to approve the February 12, 2024 minutes of the UCC. Laurie seconds. No discussion. Minutes are approved by a vote of 4-0.

7:56 pm Adjournment

- Laurie moves to adjourn the meeting. Betsy seconds. Meeting is adjourned by a vote of 4-0.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Graham.