

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION/INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES
AGENCY**

REGULAR MEETING APRIL 19, 2022, 7:30 P.M. HELD VIRTUALLY

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Winters called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Director of Community Planning and Development, George McGregor; Chair, Margery Winters; Andrew Bade, Joseph Campolieta, Donald Eaton, Charles Haldeman, and Jason Levy

Absent: James Berman and James Morrison

Charlie Haldeman was appointed as a seated member.

MOTION: Commissioner Campolieta made a motion to add item three to the agenda for the appointment of George McGregor as the Town Wetlands' Agent. Commissioner Haldeman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS

None.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None.

V. GENERAL COMMISSION BUSINESS

MINUTES – January 4, 2022

MOTION: Commissioner Campolieta made a motion to approve the January 4, 2022, Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Levy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. AGENT ACTIONS

None.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

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48 **VIII. CONSERVATION BUSINESS**

49 **1. Introduction of George McGregor, Director of Community Planning and**
50 **Development**

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 - Mr. McGregor stated that he has over twenty-five years of experience in

53 planning, with his most recent position as Town Planner for Vernon, CT.
54 Before that he was the Planning Director for a city county in Sumter,
55 South Carolina.

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57 **2. General Planning Topics**

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59 **A. Invasive Species**

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 - Chair Winters responded that the Open Space Committee has been in

62 discussion and has suggested focusing on one invasive plant a season to

63 educate the public on its role in the environment.

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 - Commissioner Campolieta offered it would be effective to do that in order

65 of severity, with the most severe being top priority.

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 - Chair Winters responded that creating a list of the top five would be good.

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 - Commissioner Haldeman summarized that the goals are education, a town

68 policy plan, and an action plan for residents

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 - Chair Winters said that the Board needs to write a letter to the Town and

70 that the priorities are to put links on the website that can educate the

71 public.

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 - Mr. McGregor asked the Board to send in links to Mr. Hollis so that a list

73 can be compiled.

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75 **B. Pollinator Pathways**

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 - Commissioner Campolieta, a member of the Board of Directors for the

78 Pollinator Pathways, stated that the Board's mission is to revitalize the

79 pollinator species and encourage environmental best practices. They

80 encourage businesses, organizations, and residents to plant native species,

81 to avoid non-native ornamentals and invasives, and to remove those that

82 are on their property.

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 - Chair Winters and Commissioner Campolieta proposed having more

84 weight in the decision making regarding environmental impact in other

85 Boards like Planning, Zoning, and Open Space.

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87 **C. Open Space**

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 - Chair Winters stated that there are some meadows that need management

90 and that there needs to be a decision on whether that is intended for the

91 pollinators or the birds. They are looking at the sizes and configurations of

different available fields and depending on which species they are intended for that will impact the mowing schedule and therefore finances.

- Commissioner Haldeman inquired of Chair Winters if the Committee is playing a supportive role or a leadership role in the Open Space Committee deciding this.
- Chair Winters responded that the Committee needs to offer best practices education, which the Town is very agreeable to following.
- Chair Winters stated that Open Space had created best practices management for organic farming, which would improve the soil. The Town has instituted a five-year rolling basis for the agricultural policy.

D. Forest Management

- Chair Winters stated that there are invasive species in the forests and wants to explore how as a town it will be addressed and how it will impact the financial budget.
- Chair Winters stated that there has been discussion in developing a Simsbury Stewards program that could manage the trails and if anyone on the Committee would be interested in overseeing that.

E. Website Updates

- Chair Winters told Mr. McGregor that the Committee would send him the education-focused links.

F. Discussion of Future Meeting Status (Virtual or In-Person)

- Chair Winters said that when there is an application it would be nice to meet in-person with the applicant
- Commissioner Haldeman and Commissioner Levy appreciate the convience of the technology.
- Mr. McGregor stated the Legislature is currently allowing in-person, virtual, and a hybrid, and they will know at the end of the month if it will be continued.
- Chair Winters stated that when there is no applicant but a discussion they can meet virtually.

G. Discussion Regarding State Environmental Committee Letter on Invasive Plants

MOTION: Commissioner Campolietta made a motion to sign onto the Letter on Invasive Plants to the State Environmental Committee. Commissioner Levy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Bade abstained.

- Commissioner Bade inquired if there were any analytics performed on the Committee's webpage to see how effective providing educational resources on it would be.
- Commissioner Campolieta commented that they could maybe have attention brought to them and the information they are adding in the Town's newsletter.
- Commissioner Levy proposed having booths at town events to raise their visibility with the public.
- Chair Winters encouraged the Committee to look at other town's Conservation Committee's websites to see how they are doing with visibility and outreach.

3. Appointment of George McGregor as the Town Wetlands' Agent

MOTION: Commissioner Campolieta made a motion to appoint George McGregor as the Town Wetland's Agent. Commissioner Haldeman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Levy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Haldeman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Blaze
Commission Clerk