

Land Stewardship Committee Meeting
July 18, 2023
7:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Present: Judy Asarkof, Adam Chojnacki (remote), Dwight DeMay, Julie Durrell, Warren Lyman, Rhonda Michaud, Claudia Talland, and Shane Usher. Debbie Geltner was absent. Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard was present (remote).

Guest: Bryan Windmiller, Associate Director of Field Conservation, Zoo New England

The hybrid remote meeting was held at Town Hall. Co-Chair Michaud called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

The June 13, 2023 minutes were approved as amended.

1. New LSC Officers Check-In:

Co-Chairs Asarkof and Michaud and Secretary Talland all checked in enthusiastically. Asarkof introduced the group to LSC's new Learning Sessions.

2. LSC Learning Session:

Bryan Windmiller gave an update and background discussion on his team's planting of liatris plants at Foss Farm.

Liatris, commonly known as New England blazing star, were once common throughout New England. Now it is a species of special concern in northeast MA because it has all but disappeared.

Since 2017, Zoo New England has been doing some small site re-introductions starting in Lexington, Acton and other local towns. In 2020 seeds from some of the original sites were used to grow seedlings that were introduced at a single site at Foss Farm. These did well in the sandy soil and a second site was planted in 2022. Now both sites are flourishing.

The hope is to start sandplain gerardia and, maybe, sundial lupine projects in the future. Bryan's group has also brought the Foss Farm wild butterfly milkweed population back from "the brink." In the recent past the Foss Farm population of butterfly milkweed had dwindled to a single plant but, with the re-introduction of seeds collected elsewhere in Carlisle, the population is now on the road to recovery.

3. Status of LSC Appointments:

Dwight DeMay, Debbie Geltner and Adam Chojnacki were reminded to go to Town Hall to be sworn in.

4. Proposals for Work Requiring Funding to be Submitted in August:

- A. Russell Street parking was discussed and will not be pursued at this time.
- B. The sign at the Malcolm Meadows parking lot belongs to The Trustees of Reservations. Instead of putting up a whole new kiosk Sylvia will see if Carlisle Conservation Commission can be acknowledged on the existing sign.
- C. Re-roofing the existing kiosks: there was brief discussion, it was agreed this is a worthwhile project.

5. CBWG Update:

Willard and Lyman confirmed that a new NOI for the bog restoration is a work in progress.

6. Bog House Update:

- A. The fire extinguishers have been replaced.
- B. The exposed wires were discussed.
- C. The wobbly external stairs: Sylvia will discuss with Steve Bastek.
- D. LSC agreed to advise that the Bog House be designated a no-smoking facility.

7. Notes on the 6/27 Select Board/ConsCom meeting:

- A. Managing the Bog House: per Lyman everything will be done legally going forward
- B. Greenough pond/spillway is an ongoing discussion.

8. Metal Detecting on Town Conservation Lands:

A review of local towns' policies on metal detecting on conservation lands by Michaud and Willard did not reveal a consensus approach. Most surrounding towns do not have a stated policy regarding metal detection. Massachusetts State Parks do not permit metal detection except with special permission. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has not responded to our inquiry on this subject. Talland's networking with The Carlisle Historic Society (CHS) confirms the CHS is in support of permitting some hobbyist metal detectors on appropriate town land.

LSC will work on recommending to ConsCom a process to allow appropriate applicants to metal detect on Town Conservation Lands with a Town-issued permit. This will likely be limited to plowed fields with no metal detecting allowed on other Town Conservation Lands. The LSC will also advise that the CHS be directly and, significantly, involved in this permitting process. Michaud and Talland will work on crafting a Land Use Regulation for metal detecting on Carlisle Conservation lands to be submitted to ConsCom for discussion

9. Towle Field:

Michaud, Usher and Lyman posted 4 new signs in the Kiosk including one detailing the new mowing protocol. Those who have seen the signs agree that they look plain. The plan is to eventually replace the current signage with a single page poster-like sign that will be eye catching, include the current information, eye-catching pictures, some text and a map. Julie and Judy will work this. New signage of this type is currently being suggested by Asarkof and Durrell for Foss Farm and the new signage for Towle will likely be crafted after the Foss sign is completed.

Michaud asked if a trash barrel could be placed in the parking lot. Willard said there is no trash haulage for Towle Field so a trash barrel cannot be placed there and she does not feel that it is a significant problem.

Usher inquired about the possibility of his placing some bat houses he has at Towle, but Willard informed the group that bat houses cannot be put up at Towle because it is a North American Bat Survey site (as are the Cranberry Bog and Foss Farm).

Next Meetings:

August 15, 2023 @ 7 PM

September 12, 2023 (tentative date)

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Submitted by Claudia Talland

Minutes approved: 8/15/23