

Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

9 December 2015

Legion Hall

Committee Members Present:

Lee Davy
Susan Black
Olin Lathrop
Holly Estes
Brian Bettencourt

Other attendees:

Adam Burnett

Meeting Activity:

- The meeting was called to order at 7:09 PM.
- The first order of business was New membership:
 - Lee Davy has been sworn in at town hall, and is now an official member.
 - Adam Burnett has been approved by the Board of Selectmen, but has yet to swear in at Town Clerk. Will do so immediately.
 - A brief discussion was held regarding Mary Minify. The committee felt that she needs to officially resign as she is unable to attend going forward. Susan Black agreed to contact Ms. Minify.
- The second order of business was the approval of minutes from the meeting of 14Oct2015:
 - The minutes were reviewed on projection screen. No changes other than typographical errors.
 - Susan Black moves to approve. Olin Lathrop seconds.
 - 4 yea, 1 abstain → motion to approve PASSES.
 - Brian Bettencourt agreed to take minutes again for this meeting.
 - Lee Davy recorded the meeting using an electronic device; will look into transcribing.
- The third order of business was discussion of each member's action items from the previous meeting:
 - Brian Bettencourt's item was initiating study on the feasibility of removing phragmites.
 - Brian Bettencourt mentioned receiving email from Mary Metzger mentioning the phragmites infestation at Broadmeadow swamp.

- Josh Degen had suggested corner of Rte 40 and Lost Lake Dr. at the previous meeting.
 - Olin Lathrop showed picture of cat-tail (NOT phragmites) taken at corner of Rte 40 and Lost Lake Dr.
 - Adam Burnett has most experience; spray is necessary no matter what. Need short-lived herbicide. Mechanical methods actually more destructive.
 - Susan Black has a cost estimate from Aquatic Control Technology for phragmites removal on her own property.
 - 4 acres of phragmites ... 1st phase \$6-9K, inclusive of fees that Susan Black (or us) could do ourselves (filings, etc.)
 - A 2nd phase (following year) was another \$1.5K again inclusive of fees
 - Brian Bettencourt wanted to know to what extent cost scales with size of property treated
 - Susan Black indicated that you don't need license to do chemical eradication on private property. Also, a group of volunteers would drive down labor cost.
 - Adam Burnett reiterated that labor is not the large driver of cost, and that it's not really necessary to remove and mulch material
 - *Action item: Susan Black to copy cost estimate material and distribute to committee.
 - *Action item: Brian Bettencourt to ask Josh Degen what parcel he was referring to (not Rte 40/Lost Lake Dr.)
 - *Action item: all committee members to report back next meeting on where phragmites is found around town.
- One of Olin Lathrop's items was to gather many pictures for a future brochure. He showed pictures of Japanese knotweed, bittersweet, phragmites (Broadmeadow in particular).
 - Another of Olin Lathrop's action items was to contact the Electric Dept. – he did this past Monday, sent picture of bittersweet on utility pole, asked for inclusion in future mailing. He will report back on progress next meeting.
 - Susan Black's action item was to bring printed materials on bittersweet to meeting. For educational brochure/materials to be distributed.
 - Brian Bettencourt asked what is the fate of these materials?
 - Susan Black brought printed material only, was concerned about sharing materials via email in light of open meeting laws.
 - Olin Lathrop reminded that sharing of photos are fine, as long as no opinions are expressed.
 - Susan Black gave printed materials to Olin Lathrop for inclusion in future brochures.

- *Action item: Olin Lathrop to produce draft of bittersweet brochure for next meeting. 1 doublesided page. Later, he will do separate smaller version for Electric Dept. mailing.
 - *Action item: Brian Bettencourt will work on Olin Lathrop's draft in Powerpoint/Publisher. Olin Lathrop to contact Brian Bettencourt – can get together on the side to work on that (non-quorum, draft basis).
 - Adam Burnett reminded the committee that it's perfectly okay also to send around draft materials via email, just don't put value judgments in emails.
- Lee Davy's item was to research town web hosting / email rules. He indicated that hosting the Invasives Committee email on the embedinc server is not ideal according to Town Clerk, and town IT administrator.
 - Lee Davy reported that town will set up invasive@townofgroton.org email address→ will we have that forwarded to the chair (Brian Bettencourt). The chair will disseminate that to the group. When Brian Bettencourt disseminates it, make sure to copy the townofgroton.org for official purposes.
 - Lee Davy – need to doublecheck if it's "invasive" or "invasives" email address
 - Lee Davy reminded the committee that we need to make sure that the agenda and minutes get to town clerk in timely fashion, and that minutes are posted on town web site.
 - *Action item: Lee Davy will continue his work, figure out how to get our materials quickly posted to town website.
 - Long term, Lee Davy is researching video options for official materials.
 - Lee Davy also introduced invasive.org, a nonprofit Florida clearing house, where one can report invasives in your neighborhood.
- Olin Lathrop mentioned that he was on the Keystone email list. Asked for recommendations for an invasive species committee, getting lots of responses back. Will report back if/when good info comes in. Keystone is a program from Umass extension – training people on forestry, etc.
- Brian Bettencourt mentioned that he had contacted Tom Delaney via email to invite him to the committee meetings, but never heard back.
 - *Action item: Brian Bettencourt to ask Josh Degen to handle that contact
- The next order of business was any other short term ideas to be worked on.
 - Brian Bettencourt mentioned that he had received an invitation for the Committee to attend the Conservation Summit, Feb 3rd at Lawrence Academy, from Mary Metzger.
 - Olin Lathrop moved that the committee respond positively to the invite. Susan Black seconded.

- The motion PASSED by unanimous vote.
 - Olin Lathrop – will attend. Brian Bettencourt would like to attend as well.
- Brian Bettencourt asked how to respond to an email about an honor society student, a project that Mary Metzger mentioned.
 - Committee felt positively about reconnecting re/ that in the springtime
 - *Action item – Susan Black to contact Mary Metzger re/ the student's project
- Adam Burnett felt the committee members should be involved with mapping phragmites around town. The committee's action item was to report back with phragmites locations next time.
 - Brian Bettencourt proposed the following granularity: is there any phragmites observable in a given parcel (number on GIS map)?
 - Idea was favorably discussed.
- The next order of business was to vote on 1st official project to advance.
 - Olin Lathrop moved to take on the 1st project – a bittersweet brochure.
 - Holly Estes seconds – PASSED via unanimous vote.
- The next order of business was to discuss Any Other Business.
 - Olin Lathrop mentioned that we need to move on formally requesting to the town that they pay for our applicator licenses (1-2).
 - Adam Burnett – wants to be one of the licensed applicators. Olin Lathrop too.
 - Olin Lathrop mentioned he has been talking informally to some selectmen about it, and finds them generally favorable. The sticking point is not the money associated with the license, it's the insurance for it. Someone needs to talk to Town Manager, and see if we can piggyback on town insurance policy (as official town committee members)
 - Olin Lathrop moved to propose to town:
 - that they pay for 1-2 applicator licenses, in return for our services for free
 - we would like to be covered by town insurance.
 - Holly Estes seconded. PASSED by unanimous vote.
 - *Action Item: Olin Lathrop will talk to Town Manager about our proposal.
 - Lee Davy mentioned that IPANE has invasives mapping online ... GPS or address-based. Individual data points for the national database.
 - Adam Burnett indicated we could use these points for our (for example) phragmites maps.
 - Lee Davy demonstrated how one can upload pictures.
 - Brian Bettencourt mentioned we need to make sure that it's acceptable for official committee documents to be uploaded to this site,

and that we will ask Josh Degen at the next meeting what his opinion on that is.

- The final order of business was to wrap up and adjourn.
 - The Committee noted that Holly Estes will have lots of material and her voice will be heard next meeting.
 - Susan Black moves to adjourn; Olin Lathrop seconds. PASSED by unanimous vote.
 - The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.