

# Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

10 February 2016

Legion Hall

Committee Members Present:

Brian Bettencourt

Adam Burnett

Olin Lathrop

Meeting Activity:

- The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM.
- The first order of business was the review of minutes from the 13 January 2016 meeting.
  - The draft minutes were reviewed on the projection screen; no changes were suggested.
  - Olin Lathrop moved to approve the minutes; Adam Burnett seconded.
  - Motion to approve the minutes passed by unanimous vote.
- The second order of business was any membership updates.
  - Olin Lathrop talked to Mark Gerath at the recent Conservation Summit; he said NO thank you, too much on his plate.
  - Adam Burnett has a candidate member at his place of employment; he will approach him.
  - Action Item: Adam Burnett to ask professional colleague if he'd be interested in joining the committee.
- The third order of business was Committee name/structure updates (if necessary).
  - Both Olin Lathrop and Brian Bettencourt indicated they hadn't heard anything back from Mark Haddad re/ the Selectmen's agenda.
    - The committee had sent him the reasons for the name change; Mr. Haddad had indicated it would get on the agenda
    - Similar situation for the applicators' licenses --- still haven't heard back from Mr. Haddad.
  - Olin Lathrop mentioned that he still has the info re/ applicators' licenses.
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt to inquire as to status of both our requests to get items on the selectmen's agenda; will CC group.
  - Olin Lathrop thought it was possible they did it already and forgot to let us know.

- The fourth order of business was the review of draft Bittersweet Brochure (publication version)
  - A review of the draft brochure, displayed on the projection screen as laid out in publication format by Brian Bettencourt, ensued.
  - Olin Lathrop hadn't imagined it as bifold but felt it worked.
    - Adam Burnett agreed – felt it's easy to stick in pockets etc.
  - Olin Lathrop suggested getting rid of indents, make sure there were blank lines above paragraphs.
    - Brian Bettencourt: agreed
  - Olin Lathrop suggested getting rid of copyright notice on front.
    - Brian Bettencourt: Agreed, and added he would increase font size on cream paragraph on front to fill the resulting empty space.
  - Adam Burnett questioned the use of the word "oriental", i.e. "Oriental Bittersweet")
  - Brian Bettencourt mentioned that he'd looked it up in current botanical sources, and confirmed it is definitely the correct common name.
  - Olin Lathrop and Adam Burnett asked that the picture of berries be "zoomed in".
    - Brian Bettencourt: will do
  - Brian Bettencourt mentioned wanting to add a sentence about the berries on 2<sup>nd</sup> page. "In fall and winter, bright red berries with yellowish husks are abundant."
    - Olin Lathrop, Adam Burnett: support the idea
    - Adam Burnett described some research he'd done about differences between native/non-native bittersweet... berries appear only on ends vs. along stem.
    - Adam Burnett: also, native makes fewer seeds and isn't as good a climber.
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt to finish brochure.
  - Brian Bettencourt asked then what happens --- how to print?
  - Olin Lathrop mentioned that the next townwide event is Riverfest--- 100-200 copies will be needed then.
  - Adam Burnett felt the printing could be done at kinko's, they can print and fold.
  - Action Item: Adam Burnett to research cost at kinko's or staples
    - Brian Bettencourt asked about paper ... perhaps ask for something a little better than copier paper.
    - Olin Lathrop agreed; a slight upgrade from copy paper, not glossy, would be good.
  - Brian Bettencourt felt that the committee should cover the cost of printing; don't ask for town funding.
  - Olin Lathrop agreed, and felt this would generate good will.
- The fifth order of business was reporting on Phragmites (common reed) around town.

- Brian Bettencourt described his mapping out of phragmites in the eastern part of town – not in Carmichael but in smaller swamps on same roads, storm basins in developments.
  - Olin Lathrop found none in the large marsh off Raddin.
  - Adam Burnett didn't see any in the swamp by the Forest Bells.
  - Olin Lathrop felt he needs to check half moon swamp (neither Olin Lathrop nor Brian Bettencourt thought they'd seen any there previously)
  - Brian Bettencourt felt he needs to check the Heronry.
  - Brian Bettencourt mentioned the corner of route 40/lost lake ... no phragmites.
  - Brian Bettencourt also mentioned that Broadmeadow swamp is quickly becoming all phragmites.
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt to check areas in West Groton.
  - Action Item: Olin Lathrop hiking Throne on Sunday 1 PM; will check there.
  - Adam Burnett reported lots of reed by Wrangling brook; on 225 where hill road comes off.
  - Brian Bettencourt also felt the committee should investigate the backwaters of the Squanacook river.
    - Adam Burnett agreed, and mentioned that phragmites can grow 4-5 feet above water table.
- The fifth order of business was a report from the Conservation Summit.
    - Brian Bettencourt, Holly Estes, and Olin Lathrop attended.
    - Olin Lathrop was overall disappointed; he felt the summit was not as useful as past year(s).
    - Brian Bettencourt enjoyed the high school environmental club presentation, but otherwise agreed.
    - Olin Lathrop mentioned that next year, the Trails Committee will run the summit. Last year the summit had very brief intros of groups, with real breakout sessions (i.e. invasive species!), then got back together to talk about results from breakouts. This year's summit had no moderation and intros were very long.
      - Olin Lathrop: There was no time for breakouts afterwords; only 10 minutes.
      - Olin Lathrop: There was not enough opportunity to talk to Rick Muehkle about applicator licenses.
    - Brian Bettencourt and Olin Lathrop agreed: Next year the Trails committee will try to do a good job.
  - The sixth order of business was a review of standing action items.
    - Action Item: Adam Burnett was to explore how to potentially become a member of the Conservation Committee.

- Olin Lathrop asked Peter (chair of Conservation Committee). Peter indicated that since Mary left, they are actively looking. Adam Burnett needs to get name in.
  - Action Item: Olin Lathrop to reach out to Mark Gerath and see if interested in membership.
    - Done --- can't do it
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt to reserve Legion Hall for Wednesdays post January - call town
    - Done
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt, Olin Lathrop to look for sprays of bittersweet berries to take a picture.
    - Done
  - Action Item: Adam Burnett to find out if we even have any American bittersweet left around here.
    - Adam Burnett indicated he'd researched it and found no documentation that he knows of, although the plant was native here at one time.
  - Action Item: Olin Lathrop to send full size pics (provide a link), text to Brian Bettencourt for publisher like work.
    - Done
  - Action Item: Olin Lathrop to post draft brochure to website.
    - Done
  - Action Item: Adam Burnett will note locations of phragmites in his travels.
    - This work is continuing.
  - Action Item: Brian Bettencourt to email Town Manager that the committee voted to recommend that our name be "Invasives Species Committee"...
    - Done
  - Action Item: Olin Lathrop to recommend Brian Bettencourt for Keystone and forward details.
    - Done
- The seventh and final order of business was "Any Other Business" / Wrap-up.
    - Brian Bettencourt mentioned Scott Smyers (Oxbow Associates) as a resource for future restoration work, and felt the committee should keep that contact open.
  - Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn; Adam Burnett seconds; motion carried by unanimous vote.
  - The Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.