

Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

13 Feb 2017

Legion Hall

Committee Members Present:

Brian Bettencourt

Adam Burnett

Greta Marks-Strouble

Olin Lathrop

Agenda:

- 1) Review of Minutes from last meeting
- 2) Preparations for the Groton Conservation Summit on the 16th, including review of materials to be distributed
- 3) Preparations for public seminar with Michelle Ruby on the 22nd
- 4) Review of printed Japanese Knotweed brochure and draft Japanese Barberry brochure
- 5) Herbicide applicator licenses - how to get them and what to do with them
- 6) Any Other Business

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

The 1st order of business was the review of Minutes from the 9 Jan 2017 meeting.

- The draft minutes were displayed on screen.
- No changes were proposed.
- Adam Burnett moved to approve the minutes as drafted.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble seconded.
 - The motion to approve passed by unanimous vote - Olin Lathrop abstained since he wasn't at the last meeting.

The 2nd order of business was preparation for the Conservation Summit.

- The committee reviewed the draft material that was worked on at the last meeting.
 - Discussion centered on the assumption that Olin Lathrop had received committee member photos that were emailed at the last meeting.
- Olin Lathrop indicated he'd emailed a link to the Summit document (describing the committee) to the list, and to all attendees.
- Olin Lathrop took an Action Item to update the document with the pictures.
- The committee discussed preparations – the Summit was to be held the coming Thursday, 6 PM at the Lawrence Academy Media Center.
 - Actual start 7 PM after networking time, cookies and juice etc.
 - 7 PM: Intro to all the groups (brief!)
 - David Black next to give a 30min keynote talk about cooperation between groups.
 - Then: Discussion among groups, focus on material that's relevant for all.
 - The goal is to leave with ideas for cooperation and better understanding-
 - Invasive species is a great common issue!
- The committee felt the document looked great; no formal approval was needed.

The 3rd order of business was the upcoming Michelle Ruby seminar (special meeting).

- Brian Bettencourt described handling publicity.
 - He took two Action Items:
 - To send a reminder to the Talk About Groton listserv a week ahead of time, and
 - To send a notice to Nashoba Valley Publishing.
- The schedule: 7 PM on February 22nd at Legion Hall, confirmed with Town Clerk by Brian Bettencourt.
- The committee checked the town website live, and made sure the special meeting was posted.
- Olin Lathrop and Brian Bettencourt agreed to both bring snacks and beverages.

The 4th order of business was review of the Knotweed and Barberry brochures.

- The committee reviewed the Japanese knotweed brochure live on screen.
 - They discussed any potential changes to photographs in the brochure.
 - Adam Burnett described finding a good stand of knotweed in Harvard on 110.
 - Brian Bettencourt reviewed correspondence with a conservation official from Skaneateles, NY conservation group regarding a picture of Japanese barberry on their website, incorporated into the brochure.
 - The committee was reminded that the brochure is approved for distribution as is.
 - The committee discussed the fact that they can make changes with versioning if need be.
 - Olin Lathrop liked the photos in the version reviewed.
 - Adam Burnett and Brian Bettencourt took an Action Item to print some brochures for Thursday's Conservation Summit.
- The committee next reviewed the draft Japanese barberry brochure.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble liked the blueberries idea presented therein.
 - Olin Lathrop felt the committee had converged on a good template for brochures.
 - Adam Burnett mentioned that barberry is much easier to kill --- it won't resprout as easily as knotweed. Exposing roots to air is effective.
 - However, branches will lay down and root. Greta Marks-Strouble agreed this was a challenge.
 - The committee edited the document live:
 - Added a mention of letting roots dry out, and not immediate composting.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble described emailing some new images, of wild barberry thickets.
 - These images were hung up an email server --- they were resent to Brian Bettencourt personally live during the meeting.
 - The committee discussed language on the barberry's spines.
 - One photo was replaced with one that Greta Marks-Strouble sent the night of the meeting.
 - The committee discussed removal methods, including burning.
 - Adam Burnett recommends burning.
 - The next discussion centered on wild type vs. cultivated varieties; the committee agreed that wild type is much nastier, with its arching habit and aggressive spreading behavior.
 - Adam Burnett questioned the use of the "not palatable to wildlife" language.
 - Brian Bettencourt indicated that birds won't go for it if there are tastier things available.
 - Brian Bettencourt indicated he'd incorporated a couple edits from Celia Silinonte (provided via email).

- Adam Burnett questioned the description of control via blowtorches.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble said she'd read a study about the method.
 - Olin Lathrop said he didn't want to give wrong information, and asked whether the actual device was a weed torch.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble searched for and found a website live during the meeting, which described the study and use of a "propane torch" for barberry control.
 - Brian Bettencourt edited the document accordingly.
- The committee discussed bringing the brochure to the Conservation Summit.
- Adam Burnett moved to approve the barberry brochure for distribution.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble seconded.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
- Adam Burnett took an Action Item to print some copies and distribute at the Summit.
- Brian Bettencourt made a PDF version at the meeting and emailed to the group for distribution.

The 5th order of business was pesticide Applicator licenses.

- Olin Lathrop said he'd taken the course in the past week, and took the test; he should know results shortly.
 - He enjoyed the course, and felt it was worth it.
- Adam Burnett agreed he will also get the study materials, which cost approximately \$60.
 - He asked whether he should keep receipts, i.e. will the town cover the cost?
 - Olin Lathrop indicated that the town manager said it would be covered.
 - Costs for a backpack sprayer and other equipment will also be covered.
- Olin Lathrop thought the course was worthwhile and the materials were good.
 - He thought test was fairly easy.
- Adam Burnett plans to take the test this spring (Mar/Apr).
 - Olin Lathrop mentioned that the course only runs on weekdays; he had to take Thurs/Fri off. The tests are on Friday in Randolph.
- Olin Lathrop reviewed the course and the preparation.
 - He attended in Marlboro.
 - The course is offered by UMass Extension.
- Olin Lathrop said he will know within a day or two if he passed the test.
 - He indicated he has to wait for the official word, then send that in, with payment and insurance or letter from official(s), to the state.
 - He will need a letter from the town manager to go with those materials.
 - Timeframe is middle-end March likely for approval.
- Adam Burnett asked whether Olin needed to wait for his own approval.
 - Olin Lathrop said no; the town manager won't care either way.
- Olin Lathrop said that once all that is done, the committee should start to look for physical equipment.
 - Some chemicals are toxic; most physical gear is all about safety.
 - This license is for regular pesticides, and to apply them to other people's property. It is not for the highly toxic "restricted" ones.
 - He would need 3 years to even apply for that license.
 - This is not something the committee would use.
- Brian Bettencourt asked whether glyphosate (Roundup) and triclopyr were covered by the license.

- Olin Lathrop responded positively.

The 6th order of business was Any Other Business.

- The committee conducted an Action Item Review.
 - Brian Bettencourt said he did not ask Mark Haddad about applying Roundup at Prescott.
 - Olin Lathrop said that was okay, since the committee is not licensed to do so.
 - Brian Bettencourt mentioned there was no need for more knotweed pictures.
 - Adam Burnett was supposed to have found a local source for red mulberry.
 - Greta Marks-Strouble mentioned that red mulberry is endangered in Massachusetts.
 - Olin Lathrop agreed to talk to the Friends of the Trees at the Summit, since they'd be a good ally in planting a red mulberry.
 - Brian Bettencourt agreed, and felt that the committee should make planting a red mulberry a joint effort with the Friends of the Trees, with corresponding joint publicity.
- Adam Burnett mentioned finding massive bittersweet vines and Norway maple at Prescott School.
- Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn.
 - Adam Burnett seconded.
 - The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.