**Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes**

**20Dec2021**

Committee Members Present:

Brian Bettencourt

Charlotte Weigel

Jonathan Basch

Olin Lathrop

Ron Strohsahl

Ben Wolfe

Richard Hewitt

Adam Burnett (remote)

Other Attendees:

Amelia Lee (remote)

Agenda:

1) Review of minutes from last meeting

2) Action Items review

3) Wild And Scenic grant proposal: Finalize asks and workplan

4) Parcel prioritization - discussion of list from subcommittee

5) Second licensed pesticide applicator - who, how, and when

6) Wrap-up of Invasive Species legislation activities

7) Vote on the next brochure

8) Open Discussion

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

The first order of business was Review of Minutes from last meeting.

* The minutes were reviewed and edited.
* Olin Lathrop moved to accept.
  + Ron Strohsahl seconded.
  + Richard Hewitt abstained from the vote as he did not attend the last meeting. The motion to accept the minutes passed by unanimous roll call, with the one abstention noted.

The second order of business was Review of Action Items from last meeting.

1. Brian Bettencourt to continue follow-up with Middle school contacts regarding invasive project at Champney rd alley
   1. Brian Bettencourt reported no further progress with available contacts
2. Charlotte Weigel to contact science teacher at Middle school in parallel on same topic
   1. Science teacher very interested in project for next year. Will revisit the topic in the summer.
3. Brian Bettencourt to report back to Garden Club on Carol Wheeler park.  Plan a day in the spring for a joint effort between Garden Club and Invasive Species Committee. Will also contact Donna Main (Parks)
   1. Done. Donna Main in favor of proposal, will have to notify Parks committee
   2. Olin Lathrop: MoU won’t cover the treatment in Carol Wheeler because it is adjacent to the Nashua river. Can write up a management plan. Parks committee would submit the management plan, treatment could then be performed under the plan. Otherwise, an RDA can be used. RDA will be pursued if management plan takes too long.
   3. **Action Item: Olin Lathrop to follow up with Don Black at Parks**
4. Jonathan Basch to contact Ben Wolfe regarding proposed grant application for Knotweed control along the Nashua River
   1. Done, Amelia will give an update during the agenda topic, see below
5. Mapping and prioritization Subcommittee to meet in December and update Invasive Species committee
   1. Agenda topic, see below
6. Ron Strohsahl to continue follow-up with MBTA to see if treatment can be arranged without paying the licensing fee for land access
   1. Pending
7. Jonathan Basch to make agreed edits to the Invasive species legislation support letter, create a pdf and distribute for signature
   1. Done, Brian Bettencourt emailed the letter to Sheila Harrington. No acknowledgement of receipt received
8. All: send lists to Brian Bettencourt of invasive species for watch list in a new brochure and/or nominate a species for its own brochure
   1. Agenda topic, see below
9. Olin Lathrop to send copy of MoU to Deb Fountain
   1. Done
   2. One change made for committee to notify the administrator of any actions taken

Standing:

1. Adam Burnett to become a EDDmaps verifier
   1. **Action Item:** **Charlotte Weigel to send Adam Burnett an email with information on how to become a verifier**

The third order of business was the Wild and Scenic grant proposal: Finalize asks and workplan

* Amelia Lee: emailed Deb Fountain for grant proposal example. Grants $5000 again this year
  + Used the EDDMaps polygons and put into ArcGIS to indicate locations of Knotweed
  + Knotweed at Campbell well and adjacent areas is ~14000 sq feet
  + Knotweed patch on Nod rd ~ 1000 sq feet
* Adam Burnett: Wild and scenic river designation starts at rt. 119 and goes south [post-meeting note: Wild and scenic river designation later extended to NH border]
* Amelia Lee: The grant proposal does not have to be limited to the designated portion of the river
* Amelia reviewed the grant application form with the committee via the Zoom meeting
* Brian Bettencourt: Knotweed spreads along rivers and crowds out other species
* Adam Burnett: Displaces valuable natural habitat
* Amelia Lee: Pepperell grant was just to start the committee, mapping, training and some equipment
* Brian Bettencourt: Treat what we can this year and then report what was done
* Jonathan Basch: Olin was proposing to include another backpack sprayer, training course and herbicide supplies
* Brian Bettencourt: Propose to include the equipment, training, license fee
  + **Action Item:** **Olin Lathrop to look into the costs and needs**
* Ben Wolfe: A good idea would be to obtain consultation on treatment and restoration
* Adam Burnett: Prepared a restoration plan for another site. Some experience with restoration
* Adam Burnett: Can we get additional tools? Applicators/Injectors
* Brian Bettencourt: Short deadline – who is leading and who is writing?
* Olin Lathrop: **Action Item to write-up what is needed for applicators**
* Brian Bettencourt: Will only be ~ 20% of the budget
* Adam Burnett: Could prepare a list of plantings for restoration
* Brian Bettencourt: Plantings would be expensive
* Adam Burnett: Seed mix might be good to establish a covering/ wetland mix for fall planting. Can use, for example, winter rye
* Adam Burnett: Erosion control seed mix to establish native forbs
* Olin Lathrop: Keep it simple, but seed mix is ok
* Charlotte Weigel: Some Knotweed on Groton school property
* Amelia Lee: Will talk to the sponsor of her project regarding Knotweed on Groton school property
* Charlotte Weigel: Amelia Lee has time to devote to this project
* Amelia Lee: Looked at contractual services
* Brian Bettencourt: Applicator equipment and glyphosate
* Ben Wolfe: Start a google doc
* Charlotte Weigel: Amelia will compile the information
* Adam Burnett: Propose to buy several seed mixes
* Charlotte Weigel: Propose getting a quote for mapping and treatment
* Brian Bettencourt: Get a quote, no harm in asking how much it would cost. Olin Lathrop to put together information.
* Ben Wolfe: Will work with Charlotte and Amelia on the text of the grant
* Charlotte Weigel: Will bring grant proposal to the next meeting

The fourth order of business was Parcel prioritization - discussion of list from subcommittee

* Ron Strohsahl: obtained list from Nik Gualco of all conservation parcels in town, overlayed criteria on the properties. Vernal pools, DEP wetlands, rare species habitat, wetlands, Mass areas of ecological significance
* Ron Strohsahl: described scoring strategy and demonstrated on map, indicated cultural column where committee members could add significance e.g., if very visible
* Charlotte Weigel: Added cultural score from information in a town plan from 2011.
* Adam Burnett: Boat launch should be considered area of cultural interest
* Olin Lathrop: Would be good to get one of us insured so we can treat private lands
* **Action Item: Olin Lathrop to find out how much it costs to get insured**
* Ron Strohsahl: Should break up into priorities- top 30 list of properties, 19/30 owned by the town
* Charlotte Weigel: Would be good to look at the Dump site all the way to the river
* Adam Burnett: A comprehensive plan is being put together for treatment and reclamation of the dump site
* Adam Burnett: Nashua River corridor should be prioritized
* Ron Strohsahl: Wetland weighted heavily in the scoring.
* Brian Bettencourt: Accessibility and visibility should also be considered
* Jonathan Basch: Accessibility and visibility considered under cultural score
* Adam Burnett: Vernal pools show some selection bias
* Ron Strohsahl: Will give access to everyone
* Brian Bettencourt: Ron Strohsahl will maintain master copy, share production copy
* Charlotte Weigel: Marked the areas that we have treated
* Ron Strohsahl: Send people on the committee out to survey the priority areas identified
* Brian Bettencourt: prepare a form to report visit, take pictures
* Charlotte Weigel: Can use EDDMAps,
* Charlotte Weigel: Next meeting will work on species lists
* **Action Item-** **Ron Strohsahl to circulate prioritized list, list of species next time**
* All: Kudos/thanks to Ron and Charlotte, excellent job with the prioritization list and map

The fifth order of business was second licensed pesticide applicator - who, how, and when

* Covered above

The sixth order of business was wrap-up of Invasive Species legislation activities

* Brian Bettencourt: Submitted letter of support to Sheila Harrington. Several committee members testified in favor of the legislation. Will be up for a vote next year.

The seventh order of business was vote on the next brochure

* Brian Bettencourt: Single species or most wanted list? Brian favors the most wanted list. Agreed, we make a most wanted list.
* Adam Burnett: Has seen jumping worms along the Nashua River.
* Olin Lathrop: Spotted lantern fly would be good for a single brochure
* Brian Bettencourt: **Action Item:** **Send Brian pictures and most wanted species**
* Olin Lathrop: compiled a list and emailed to committee members

The eighth order of business was open discussion

* Ron Strohsahl: According to coworker in Princeton MA, money available from state grant for invasive species. Need a vulnerability assessment first- Groton has already completed. Application due Jan 6th, not enough time for this year, but can plan for next year
* Olin Lathrop: Propose to go back to Zoom for next meeting because of CoVid case levels.
* **Action Item:** **Brian Bettencourt to schedule next meeting as virtual**
* Charlotte Weigel: Next subcommittee meeting for January 12th

Jonathan Basch moved to adjourn.

Ben Wolfe Seconded.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.