



# TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – 6:30 PM

LOCATION: Town Hall Meeting Room  
4417 Main St Palmer MA

Donald Blais, Chair  
Dorothy Lawrence, Vice  
Chair  
David Cotter  
Peter Izyk  
Nicholas Zeo  
Brenda Cole  
Lucas McDiarmid

**Members Present:** Donald Blais, Jr.  
Peter Izyk  
Dave Cotter  
Dorothy Lawrence  
Brenda Cole  
Lucas McDiarmid

**Members Absent:** Nick Zeo

1. **Call to Order:** 6:30 PM – Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair)

2. **Chair, Member & Committee Reports:**

- a. **Blue Trail Update:** Most of the Bennett Street signage is complete, with the exception of one location. The next thing to focus on is water/ bacteria sampling in the Quaboag River. It was stated there would be a need for volunteers to gather water samples around next June.

3. **Review Mail/Phone Messages:**

- a. **Forest Cutting Plan- Burlingame Rd:** There was discussion at the inadequate state of the plan that was submitted.
- b. **Eversource boring for Church St. Bridge Replacement:** The Agent stated she received notification from Eversource that there will be test boring done in order to replace the gas line along the church street bridge.
- c. **Spotted Lanternfly:** The Agent stated an invasive spotted lanternfly was spotted in Palmer, so information was posted on the Conservation webpage, Facebook as well as Instagram at how to identify and what to if one is located. The main issue with the species is that they can destroy a large variety of trees.
- d. **December 20th Meeting:** It was discussed that the team doing the Palmer High School track would like to meet with the Commission as soon as possible, so the Agent proposed the idea that the PCC could meet 12/20/22. There was discussion on if there would be a quorum. A decision will be made at a later date.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. 8/30/22

**Motion made by Dorothy Lawrence to approve the minutes 8/30/22.**

**Motion seconded by Dave Cotter.**

**Motion Caries 7-0.**

**No further discussion.**

**5. Agent Position Status Report:**

- a. **Office Hours:** The Agent updated the office hours. They are on the website as well on the door of the office. Currently they are 9am-4pm Monday-Thursday, with evening hours on Monday nights from 5-7pm.
- b. **Conservation Agent position:** The agent stated she has put together procedure packets for what needs to be done so in the case of her absence someone else could pick it up where it was left off. She is looking for feedback on what she can improve on. It was discussed that during the new year the commission will work on updating the bylaws to be consistent with the WPA.
- c. **Assistant Stormwater Coordinator Position:** The Agent stated there is no actual stormwater coordinator. This has been causing issues with who gets what documentation wise, causing a gray area. The 181 Culvert and Forest Lake Grants have been affected due to confusion on which department handles what, between the Conservation and Highway department. It was stated that there needs to be one point of contact in regard to Stormwater.
- d. **Agent Position: What is/isn't working for both Commission and Agent?:** The Agent opened the floor to the PCC to ask for feedback on what isn't working for them, to which the response was they wanted to hear what wasn't working for her. The agent goes on to say the administrative side of the job has been the most difficult part of the position. It takes longer to find documents rather than creating new ones. There has been no organization in the office which has been tremendously difficult to navigate. There's multiple forms that could be for the same task but there's no guidance on which one to use. She stated the whole office is extremely unorganized and there's no guidebook to follow. She requested for updates given in writing to make documentation easier. There was also discussion on possibly adding a part time stormwater coordinator position.
- e. **Administrative:** The Agent stated there is still some administrative tasks she needs help with. She has provided the PCC with a list of bullet points she will need assistance with, such as passwords, document location, website formatting etc.

**6. New/Old Business:**

- a. **Church St. Bridge Replacement DEP 256-0362 Update:** A DEP number was issued. The concern with the DEP is that a chapter 91 license is needed. The Agent sent a 21 day waiver request. At this time they are just waiting to hear back from DEP.

**Motion made by Lucas McDiarmid to adjourn at 7:44 PM**  
**Motion seconded by Dorothy Lawrence.**  
**No further discussion.**  
**Motion Caries 7-0.**