

**Georgetown Conservation Committee
Minutes**

Monday, July 11, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. [via Zoom]

- I **Call to order, welcome and introductions at 6:31 pm**
- II **Determine quorum:** Present: Aria Eee **, Roger Bogart*, Kathy Gravino*, Ruth Indrick*, Nancy Kinner*, Jessica Weller* [*Member/ **Associate Member]. Select board member: Bronwen Tudor
Guests: Chloe Shields (from New England EFC) and Rachel Madsen (resident of Georgetown)
- III **Minutes from June 20, 2022 meeting were approved as written.**
- IV **Community Resilience Partnership** (Welcome Chloe Shield from New England EFC)

Kathy gave an overview of what the team members from our Conservation Group (Kathy, Jessica and Roger) have been doing with the Community Resilience Partnership. The Community Resilience Partnership is through the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. Alongside Arrowsic, Phippsburg, Westport Island and Woolwich, we have been working to explore how climate change is affecting our local communities and exploring grant funding for projects that may help to make us more resilient. We are very fortunate to have the New England Environmental Finance Center, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, and Kennebec Estuary Land Trust helping us through this process.

At the April meeting, our Conservation Commission identified areas of interest for the Community Resilience Partnership. They were: climate ready infrastructure, efficiency and renewables and community engagement. The state has specific projects that they will grant full funding for (no match required).

Chloe shared more about the Virtual Community Workshop that will happen on August 4th. The purpose of this workshop is to gather as much input from the community at large, as to possible projects that Georgetown would like to apply for grant money for. Grants of up to 50,000 will be awarded for one town or up to 100,000 for two or more towns.

Jessica discussed the promotion for the Virtual Community Workshop for August 4th. We have submitted a Tide article, created a flyer to be hung around town, created a graphic for social media and for an email blast and Kathy and Jessica will send out personal invitations to key leaders in the community.

Kathy gave an overview of what that program will look like on August 4th. She then discussed the self-evaluation form that we have been working on for this process and the research that went into answering the questions.

Bronwen said that she appreciates that the Select Board will be able to give input on the self-evaluation document and the town's priorities (hopefully at tomorrow's meeting) as well as input from other community leaders before this document goes to the state. There was discussion and questions about the grant process and what the outcome of the August 4th meeting will be. Bronwen stressed that the Select Board will ultimately choose the project that Georgetown will apply for funding for from the approved list of projects set out by the state. She does think that community input will be important in this decision process and the information from the survey at the end of the meeting will be valuable.

Jessica asked a question about it being an election year and how long is funding guaranteed for this project. The state budget is biannual and so funding for the program has been secured for up to 2 years. The September and March deadlines will be secure. Towns can apply for grants every 6 months.

Nancy suggested we have as much information as possible before submitting our plan to the Select Board. She suggested that if we are not ready, we could go for the March deadline instead. Kathy said she'd like to go for the September deadline but understands that the timeline is tight.

We decided to have a special meeting of the Conservation Commission on Monday, August 1st at 6:30 to finalize the format and content of the August 4th workshop. In the meantime, we will discuss questions and ideas via email. Kathy is happy to send copies of any of the information that has been gathered so far if members need it.

On a related topic, Bronwen shared that the Select Board passed a letter of support for a grant that KELT filed with the state to develop a way to prioritize and rank the tidal crossings in the Kennebec Estuary. They would work with the road officials in each town within the estuary and then would work with them to set up a few tidal crossing projects. Assessment of natural resource features, assessment of risk of the site and the risk that the community would face and an assessment of the challenges for the project at the site will help with the ranking and prioritization of the potential projects. KELT will find out if they receive the grant funding in the fall.

V **Elect 2022-23 Chair**

Kathy explained that she is happy to continue but asked if anyone else would like to step into this role. There was a unanimous vote to re-elect Kathy as Chair of the Georgetown Conservation Commission for 2022-23 term.

VI **Old Business**

- ◇ Climate Change Adaptation Report Approval

- The Climate Change Adaptation Report was approved unanimously by the commission.
- ◇ Approve 2021-22 Annual Report
 - The 2021-22 Annual Report was approved unanimously by the commission.
- ◇ Membership List
 - The 2021-22 Membership List was approved unanimously by the commission.

VII **New Business**

- ◇ Summer Oyster Program Update: Friday, August 19th
 - Aria said we are all set to go for the *Eats and Meets* event for Friday, August 19th between 4-6pm. It will be part of the Harborside General Store weekly “Happy Hour Event”. We will have 2-3 speakers, a demo of oyster shucking and live music. Aria will put an article in the Tide and create a flyer. After some discussion, it was decided to set up a table with information about our Conservation Commission with handouts, trail maps, a flyer for Coastal Clean-up, information about the Community Resilience Partnership etc. There is no rain date for this event in place at this time.
- ◇ Survey of Round the Cove (John Wood) – update
 - No updates but we will keep it on the agenda because John will be working on the survey later this summer.
- ◇ Coastal Cleanup 2022
 - Potential Date, Saturday, September 17th
 - This date works well with tides and our Conservation Commission
 - New Collection Format for 2022
 - Ruth discussed a potential new format to eliminate the volunteers spending the day at the transfer station.
 - There would be a process in place for individuals to weigh their own trash and then fill out a simple form with their names, collection location, total weight of trash and any interesting items they found.
 - Kathy talked with Jim at the transfer station last week and he said he was fine with the date and would set up a table and a scale. We will discuss with him the new self-service process as the date gets closer.
 - This led into a discussion about the transfer station and the problem around recyclables and the pile up of return bottles and cans. The Conservation Commission is willing to help with this problem and Bronwen will share this with the Solid Waste Management committee at their meeting this week.
- ◇ Program on Climate Change in the Gulf of Maine

- We will table this for now as we have so much going on but will keep it on the agenda as a future program.

- ◇ Harvest Dinner
 - Nancy would like to do the Harvest Dinner again this year. COVID is a concern and there is a worry about gathering indoors. It was suggested to do an outdoor gathering in the early fall. Nancy offered to take the lead on this event and Ruth suggested doing a lunch program as the weather will be warmer during the daylight hours. The Meetinghouse or the Community Center are possible venues. Kathy asked if we could move this agenda item to our second meeting on August 1st and in the meantime we can gather more information about time and space. Aria will look at Saturday, October 8th at 1pm at the Meetinghouse or the Community Center as a potential place and date. Jessica will write a quick blurb about Saving the Date for the Harvest Dinner for the August/September Tide.

- ◇ Tide Article Reminder—Deadline Tuesday, July 12th

- ◇ Stiltgrass in Georgetown
 - Kathy explained that Jim Peavey from Age Friendly sent out an email that stiltgrass had been found in Clarey Pond and in the Schoener Forest. It is an invasive species, spreads very quickly and can be damaging to woodland forests. Jim Peavey asked that if anyone spotted stiltgrass to contact a member of Conservation Commission.
 - Roger has a background in forestry and is able to identify stiltgrass. He explained that stilt grass does not form the seeds until August or early September. Roger has already been out in the field on some calls and found that the grass in question was not stiltgrass.
 - Any emails about stiltgrass should go to Roger Bogart of the Conservation Commission or Tenley Wurglitz at KELT to let them know.

- ◇ Membership
 - The Conservation Commission is looking for a new alternate member to fill a vacancy. We recommend that potential applicants who've talked with us apply for appointment with the Town Office.

VIII **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, August 9th 2022 at 6:30pm (**TUESDAY MEETING TIME**)

IX **Meeting Adjourned at 8:09pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Weller