

CONNECTICUT RIVER GATEWAY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 2019

Present/Absent: [Excused absence (E); Unexcused absence (U)]

Chester:	Margaret (Peggy) Wilson, Jenny Kitsen (E)
Deep River:	Nancy Fischbach, Vacancy
East Haddam:	Crary Brownell, Joel Ide (E)
<i>Essex:</i>	Claire Mathews, Mary Ann Pleva
<i>Fenwick:</i>	<i>Newton Brainerd, Borough Warden</i>
<i>Haddam:</i>	Susan Bement, Mike Farina (E)
Lyme:	J. Melvin Woody, Wendy Hill
Old Lyme:	Peter Cable, Suzanne Thompson
Old Saybrook:	Bill Webb, Tom Gezo (E)
<i>Regional Rep:</i>	Raul Debrigard (7pm)
DEEP:	David Blatt
Staff:	<i>J H Torrance Downes (E)</i>
Guests:	Richard Snarski, Penny Rezendes Friends of North Cove, Dianne Maher Friends of North Cove

Call to Order

Chair Thompson called the regular meeting of the Connecticut River Gateway Commission to order at RiverCOG offices located at 145 Dennison Road, Essex at 7:05pm.

Approval of 4/25/19 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes by **Fischbach**, seconded by **Wilson**, passed unanimously. Non-substantive typos noted by Matthews will be corrected.

Discussion: Request by Richard Snarski for \$6,000 grant for a multiyear project to eradicate woody invasives on land in Lords Cove owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Snarski, and Tulla, another landowner. Snarski spoke on behalf of his request. TNC is introducing disease resistant elm trees to the Lords Cove flood plain land management plan, and 6 woody invasive species, especially the multiflora rose, are in the way. The invasives will first be removed mechanically; 2 months later, when the invasives re-sprout, Triclopyr, a broad leaf herbicide, will be applied. The plan is balanced over time with input from CT DEEP and TNC to protect New England cottontail rabbits by providing habitat until green briar, a native species, returns.

Triclopyr will be applied to specific plants using a backpack sprayer; it will not be broadcast. Triclopyr is a targeted herbicide that kills broadleaf plants but not grasses nor animals or insects and can be spread over water, because it affects the amino acids of the plants, starving them over time.

TNC is contributing the elm trees to the project; Tulla is contributing \$650.

Thompson read out loud 2 letters to the Gateway Commission in support of this project. TNC's David Gumbart's May 16 letter supported the control method used in this project, because the selective application with a backpack after mechanical cutting will greatly reduce the application of herbicide required, unlike a full broadcasting approach.

Lisa Wahle's letter, she is a contractor to the Wildlife Management Institute at the CT DEEP Wildlife Division also supported the plan.

Motion by Fischbach, seconded by Bement, to approve this request. The vote was 11 for, 1 against. Matthews, who voted against, spoke against Gateway funding for projects using chemicals and pesticides even if currently approved because they may still be dangerous. Thompson spoke to the need for the Gateway Commission to support a range of projects on a continuum of practices, and discussed a demonstration project involving no Gateway funding that will use only mechanical means to eliminate Japanese knotweed.

Treasurers Report

Matthews presented the Treasurers Report. The portfolio value is now greater than \$2M and operating expenses are running at about 3%. Motion by Matthews, seconded by Bement, to pay the bills. Passed unanimously.

Debrigard asked for an update on the efforts by the Public Outreach and Governance committees to identify projects that can should be funded by the Commission.

Correspondence/Staff Report

The report was handed out and read at the meeting.

Fischbach, at the request of 1st Selection Angus McDonald, will continue as the Deep River representative for a few months because otherwise Deep River would have no representation on the Commission. Fischbach will be providing a letter to the Commission confirming this.

Variance Applications for Commission Review. None.

Special Exception for Commission Review. None.

Regulation Review and Approval pursuant to Section 25-102 G CGS. None.

Committees Reports

Land Committee. No report of significance.

Governance Committee. Webb will chair the committee going forward. At the meeting, Fischbach provided Webb and Thompson with flash drives of documents to enable the transition. Debrigard discussed the need to address town grievances.

Public Outreach Committee. The 2019 Gateway boat trip is scheduled for June 12th. Arrangements for food and drinks were discussed. Cable will purchase the wine. Thompson, Bement and Pleva will purchase the food.

Old Business:

Thompson asked to be authorized to create a new committee to create grant application formats for requests to the Commission for funding. As chair, Thompson is authorized to create new committees. Motion by Fischbach, seconded by Matthews, passed unanimously.

New Business:

East Haddam development proposal: Debrigard alerted the Commission to an East Haddam proposal to develop the old town hall building near the river. Brownell told the Commission that the proposal hasn't yet been submitted to East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission, which he chairs. Apparently, the proposal will come from a commission created by the East Haddam 1st Selectman. Debrigard asked that Downes talk to the town planner about it as soon as possible. Fischbach discussed early involvement by the local Gateway Commission reps.

Japanese Knotweed eradication projects: Multiple possible non-chemical technologies were discussed. Matthews provided detail on a project by the Common Good Garden in Old Saybrook where winter squash is grown while the knotweed is suppressed using cardboard.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Thompson, seconded by Bement.