

## ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

May 18, 2021

Present: Phine Ewing (Chair), Paul Schlein, Susan Fenn, Noreen Blaiklock, Jesse McMahan, Karen Robbins

1. The virtual meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM
2. The minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting were unanimously accepted as amended.
3. Mail: None received this month
4. Roadside Clean-up Recap: Phine reported that 16 teams signed up and that represented approximately 25 people. The entire length of Route 127, Baldhead Road, and Whitmores Landing were covered and the majority of the Old Stage Road. Phine had a positive response from residents, as they seemed to like to help and on a day of their own choosing. Phine suggested that this year's approach to road side clean-up be considered going forward, COVID or not, because volunteers could control their schedule, trash and recycling was dispersed among the various households and it isn't so weather dependent. She would only ask that volunteers call in before doing a section of road to reduce overlap of efforts.
5. SPCAMP Trail Maintenance: Chips were spread on the trail. Unauthorized trails were brushed in to allow for revegetation. Signs to alert the public were placed. Phine checked the past couple of days and the signage is still there. It was decided to place an additional sign at the start of the trail reading "Revegetation in Progress – Please stay on designated trails". It was also decided to replace the "Kindle no Fires" sign with a "No Fires Allowed" sign. Because of evolving language usage of the word "kindle", young people have misunderstood the sign to allow for small fires that are built from kindling only. Thanks to Maine Tree for the chips and Elwell Enterprises for moving them on to the Conservation Area.
6. Water Conservation Tips: It was decided the most effective way to educate people about water conservation is to have Sheila point residents to the Town's website a couple more times as needed. There is a concern that if it is in every week's email notification, people will begin to ignore the information. Phine will write a paragraph for Sheila to use and ask her to print it a couple more times. The Stewardship Guide and its guidance is still on the Arrowsic website.
7. Alewives: Counting continues, some scale samples have been taken. It was noted that volunteers haven't observed the quantities of fish that had been trapped during the most recent trapping seasons. No pattern of passage has revealed itself. Phine spoke with a gentleman with knowledge of the Center Pond, Phippsburg alewife fishery. He reported that Center Pond's numbers were way down this year. Susan reported that Damariscotta and Nequasset are having good years.
8. Water Quality Sampling Schedule: Phine and Karen June 8, Phine and Karen June 12.
9. Sewall Pond Litter Patrol: May 29 - Paul, June 5 - Susan, June 12 - Phine.

10. Comprehensive Plan Update: Phine suggested that members be thinking about what the ACC would like to contribute. She also reminded us that the ACC should be represented on the committee. The plan is in the “pre-planning” stage.
11. Other: Phine noted that the ACC has consumed its entire 20-21 budget this year. Karen Dowell is considering stepping down from the Commission. This led to a discussion about the most convenient day and time for each member to meet. Phine will check the Town’s meeting calendar to determine what day and times are available.
12. Nature Notes: Noreen hasn’t seen a lot of bumble bees and was reassured to hear that Jesse has a lot of bumble bees. Paul had a pileated woodpecker destructively pecking at his house especially around windows. After ruling out the presence of insects, he determined it was most likely territory marking behavior. He has attached streamers (so large they are visible from the road) to the window. The streamers appear to be helping although they seem to be keeping other birds away from his yard as well. Only blue jays and tufted titmice seem undeterred. Jesse had a rose breasted grosbeak and a couple of Baltimore orioles. Susan’s blue birds fledged May 10<sup>th</sup>, at 21 days. She has noticed that as of today the parents are still feeding them. Her humming birds are back and she has a chipping sparrow nest with small blue eggs. Paul has noticed that compared to last year he doesn’t have as many squirrels and until today would have said he didn’t have any chipmunks. He wonders what the drivers are for “squirrel cycles”. He also had 3 cow birds for a few days and was wondering why they were hanging around. The fringed polygala is in bloom at Sewall Pond. Many people remarked on how many strawberry blossoms they have and how the chipmunks and squirrels will get most of them. Phine had the last frost mid-April which she finds disconcerting as it has historically been mid-May.
13. The meeting adjourned unanimously at 6:03 PM.
14. The next meeting will be June 15, 2021 at 5 PM. Meetings will be conducted virtually until physical distancing recommendations are lifted.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robbins, Acting Secretary