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CITY HALL
62 Friend Street
Amesbury, MA 01913

Amesbury Open Space, Natural Resources, and Trails Committee MEETING MINUTES June 25, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was conducted under the "Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law" G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, signed on March 12, 2020.

Attending:

- Call to Order: 7:02 p.m., with Jonathan Sherwood, Rich Hucksam, Fred Zackon, Jessica Redfern, and Pascal Rettig present. Conservation Agent Amanda Armington also attending.
- Minutes from March 26, 2025 meeting: Zackon moved and Hucksam seconded motion to approve. Unanimous.
- Public Comment: None
- Chair's Report: Sherwood reported on communication from OSNRTC member Michelle Faucher, who is also OSNRTC's representative on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The CPC is ready to compile its plan for Community Preservation funds, which means developing priorities and recommendations for the eligible areas. OSNRTC will be invited to present to the CPC at its August 2025 meeting, regarding Open Space and Recreation needs and priorities. CPC makes recommendations for spending to City Council, which is the appropriating authority for CPA funds. By the time funding of projects will begin in 2026, the CPA fund will have over \$1M available; Open Space and Recreation projects will receive at least 10% of the available funds. Sherwood asked OSNRTC members to consider what priorities and needs that we would like to communicate to the CPC in August; OSNRTC will devote July 2025 meeting to developing this presentation. Sherwood will re-circulate links to the Community Preservation Coalition's website and technical assistance materials, for framing of what can and cannot be done with CPA funds in these two eligible activity areas.
- Referrals:
 - **City Council Bill #2025-072** Appropriation for 128 Kimball Road Purchase: OSNRTC had previously recommended purchase of this property, in support of a City of Amesbury application for funds from the Commonwealth. OSNRTC determined that it could update the recommendation from early 2025, which detailed the environmental and recreational value of this parcel. Sherwood will update that communication and send to the City Council as a positive recommendation. Redfern moved positive recommendation, Zackon seconded, with unanimous approval.

- Other Business:
 - **South Woodsom Mowing:** Redfern would like to revisit the mowing of the South hill at Woodsom Farm, to align with a no-mow schedule in order to promote grassland bird breeding on site. Next steps would be to take up discussion with the City and then hold a public hearing on the matter, resulting in a recommendation to change or not change current mowing plan. Redfern will follow up with reaching out to the City (DPW and Mayor) regarding this.
 - **Amesbury Eco Gardeners:** Sherwood had met with Robin Cohn and Lory Douglass from the Amesbury Eco Gardeners to discuss a possible pilot project at Woodsom Farm to remove and remediate invasive plant species in a wooded area immediately by the parking lot on the North side of Woodsom Farm. Sherwood drafted and presented an 18 month plan to survey the site for all plant species (native, non-native, and non-native invasive), develop a removal plan, organize an removal effort, and improve existing / desired plants on site. Some question that this may be ambitious at the moment and may not be the best use of community time and energy. At same time, these kinds of efforts can be good community projects that energize people and connect them with community natural resources. Sherwood will continue conversation with Eco Gardeners group; unsure if the would support this particular project as scoped, as well.
 - **Amesbury Open Space Forum planning:** Committee continued discussion of what type of event would be best. What are goals? Education? Connecting Groups? Recruiting volunteers (and for what)? Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (such as OSNRTC, Con Comm, Eco Gardeners, Lake Gardner Improvement Association, etc) is a key goal. No concrete next steps determined.
- Motion to adjourn

Minutes unanimously approved at 08/27/2025 meeting, respectfully submitted by Jonathan Sherwood, Chair, OSNRTC