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AMESBURY

CITY HALL
62 Friend Street
Amesbury, MA 01913

**Amesbury Open Space, Natural Resources, and Trails Committee
MEETING MINUTES
March 26 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: Present – Jonathan Sherwood, Fred Zackon, Michelle Faucher, Jena Jekums, Pascal Rettig. City: Amanda Armington
- Minutes from January 22, 2025 and February 26, 2025 meetings. Zackon moved and Rettig seconded approval of minutes, unanimously approved.
- Public Comment: none
- Communications:
 - Jesssica Redfern had sent message to Mayor Gove and Joe Buckley (DPW) regarding the OSNRTC recommendation to change mowing status of south hill at Woodsom Farm (in order to promote grassland bird breeding) and move fireworks to Labor Day weekend or other date after August 15. Mayor Gove and Joe Buckley (DPW) both responded with opinion that the City is not required to alter the mowing practices because of the Natural Heritage designation noted in the Audubon report for Woodsom Farm and that there is no plan to change the mowing schedule and move the fireworks to a date other than July 4. Zackon brought up question as to whether or not OSNRTC should hold a public hearing on the topic. Rettig felt this may not be worthwhile, with the City currently not interested in making this change. No motion made.
- Projects:
 - Re-appointment of Michelle Faucher to CPA Committee representing OSNRTC. With the term cycle for this new committee, Ms. Faucher needed to be re-appointed. Zackon moved and Sherwood seconded re-appointment of Michelle Faucher as OSNRTC representative on the CPA Committee.
 - Signage for grassland bird nesting season: Following on recommendations from the Woodsom Farm and Battis Farm management plan reports, OSNRTC, working with Lake Gardner Improvement Association, would like put up signage at trailheads and along main trails at Woodsom Farm (north) and Battis Farm reminding users that grassland bird breeding was in progress, asking them to stay on trail and keep dogs leashed. Sherwood shared sample signage used by Essex County Greenbelt Association. Lake

Gardner Improvement Association as agreed to sponsor the signs and posts; Sherwood will work with City for design approval and ordering. No action / vote needed.

- Town Forest Trail Reblazing: The reblazing of trail markers and the creation of primary 'outer loop' trails at the Town Forest was a priority and high impact recommendation from the 2024 Trail Assessment report. Following up on that prioritization, the Lake Gardner Improvement Association / Amesbury Trails' working group for this project has a concrete plan for locations, marking, and signage. Plan will be presented for acceptance by Conservation Commission at their April 7, 2025 meeting. Nick Cracknell and Amanda Armington continue to reach out to the landowner of an adjacent parcel that has a trail portion for one of the proposed loops; they will seek temporary/conditional permission to route one of the trails through a back part of their parcel (74 Kimball Road). Sherwood will send materials to Zackon (Conservation Commission). No action / vote needed.
- Invasive Plant Removal: After February discussion regarding interest in invasive plant removal on city-owned property, Conservation Agent Amanda Armington followed up with Sherwood regarding Conservation Commission requirements and involved. Armington suggested that projects could be approved as 'Requests for Determination of Applicability' (RDA) applications rather than as more involved 'Notice of Intent' (NOI) applications. The Agent and the Commission would welcome applications for this sort of project. Interested members from Lake Gardner Improvement Association had been invited but were unable to attend this meeting. No action / vote needed.
- Referrals:
 - None at this time. Rettig provided update on status of the 2024 REDD / Meadowbrook Solar Project. No action / vote needed.
- Adjourned 8:30 p.m., Zackon motion, Jekums second. Unanimously approved.

Minutes unanimously approved at its June 25, 2025 meeting, respectfully submitted by Jonathan Sherwood, Chair, OSNRTC