

MINUTES

A SPECIAL ROOSEVELT FOREST COMMISSION MEETING WAS HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 3RD, 2016 AT THE STRATFORD TOWN HALL IN ROOM 213 AT 5:00 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Bob David; Chairman, Pete Mariconda; Vice Chairman, Chuck Emerson, Bob Ford, Jim Brown, Ellen Scerba-Carey, Frank Bevacqua, Tina Manus, 10th District (absent) (a, Town Council, Allen Llewelyn, District 9 ~ Town Council (absent)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Bob David, Chairman, Pete Mariconda, Vice Chairman, Frank Bevacqua, Jim Brown, Bob Ford,

GUESTS:

Town Residents:

Kim Perillo
Ralph Grasso
Stephanie McLaughlin
Jennifer Kepchar
Steve Politico
Maria Politico
Andrea Petillo
Rick Marcone

CALL TO ORDER: 5: 02 P.M by Bob David, Chairman, Six Commission members were in attendance and Quorum was declared

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Bob Ford and seconded by Pete Mariconda to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2016 meeting. The Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business of Special Meeting:

Beavers ~ further discussion regarding the Beaver Dam took place. Mr. David and the commission spoke for about 20 minutes regarding the status of the dam. Mr. David and Mr. Bevacqua were adamant and highly disappointed the Roosevelt Forrest commission was ignored and the dam is still in essence in place. Town Residents Stephanie McGlaughlin asked why trapping has not been done yet. Mr. David explained that the dam needs to be breached. Ms.

McLaughlin stated they are just beavers. Mr. David reiterated he wanted the dam to be breached to relieve the flooding of the Forest Floor. He stated the water is the issue and he was looking for Public Works to relieve the pressure. Town Resident Ralph Grasso stated the beavers had to be trapped. Mr. Grasso stated his wife was in Real Estate and as a Developer this dam would affect property values. Mr. Politico also said this has dragged out long enough and the beavers needed to be trapped

Tina Batoh, the Towns Conservation Supervisor called Stratford resident Stephanie McLaughlin's telephone at approximately 5:25 pm. Stephanie McLaughlin asked Mr. David if he would allow Tina Batoh to speak on the subject. Ms. McLaughlin's cell phone was put in the middle of the table. Ms. Batoh was with Mr. Esposito going to a tree warden class in Stamford, CT Mr. David allowed Ms. Batoh to speak. Ms. Batoh stated that major breaching of the dam was done and the Beavers already rebuilding the dam. She said it was done last week, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. A few commission members were at the forest almost daily within the past couple of weeks and took photos; the dam did not look any different. Ms. Batoh stated to Mr. David that she has time dated pictures. Mr. David said he along with Mr. Beavaqua and Mr. Ford has been in the Forest and Mr. David stated they have a difference of opinion on what is significantly breached.

Mr. David also asked why can't the Public Works Department use machinery to destroy the dam. He stated Aquarion had heavy equipment in that area a few years ago. Ms. Batoh explained that machinery needs special permitting. Ms. Batoh said state permits would be needed if the watercourse was to be altered. She also stated the trapping has to happen before March 31st 2016 because the State has regulations on trapping after that date.

The commission members tried to explain to Tina as well as the Town residents (named above) that the commission had been requesting for a couple of months that the Stratford public works department significantly breach the dam. At the time if the beavers did not leave on their own, and the water levels did not go down, then at the time we would consider requesting a motion to trap the beavers, since the commission did not want property owner's property or homes to be in danger. Ms. Politico also stated that the Town has done very little since given notification on October 28th 2015 to do something about the problem. Ms. Petillo asked why no trapping has taken place. Mr. David said he was waiting for the dam to be breached to see if the water would go down and/or the beavers would move out of the area. Mr. David said numerous agencies including the State of Connecticut DEEP, and Beardsley Zoo was called. Mr. David reaffirmed that trapping has to be a last resort. Mr. David who is a resident of the area insists that no traps be put out until the public is notified. Although he understands all the traps are submerged underwater. The commission wants a report from the trapper on how many traps are being placed and a report of unanticipated targets being trapped (other animals) He was reminded by Mr. Ford that the State of Connecticut does not allow relocation of Beavers. Mr. Ford stated that Beavers were reintroduced in the State of Connecticut for the purpose of trapping.

Mr. David also stated he was very worried that the water level is not even at the highest level yet and was worried about a tree falling on someone's home.

Mr. Ford stated he saw no other option available to the commission except to

authorize the Town to contract with a licensed DEEP trapper.

A motion was made by Bob Ford and Seconded by Jim Brown for public works department to hire a licensed trapper to trap the beavers. A roll call vote was taken.

Peter Marconda – no
Frank Bevacqua – yes
Jim Brown – yes
Bob Ford - yes
Bob David-Yes

Motion Passed 4-1. Mr. David made another statement. He stated in his 17 years as an elected official this was one of the hardest votes he had ever cast. He was “highly disappointed” that significant breaching was not done to the dam. He also questioned on why DEEP has not sent written policy to the commission to confirm these beavers could not be relocated. He stated he was meeting Town officials (Chad Esposito from Public Works and Larry Ciccarelli, Director of Public Safety at 0830 on March 4th 2015. Town Resident Ralph Grasso was also going to this meeting. He stated to Mr. Grasso this Commission reports to the Town Council and Mayor and ultimately they can overrule the commission.

A second motion was made by Bob Ford and seconded by Jim Brown for public works department to completely remove the dam and debris from the forest, as well as the other debris that is located north of Pumpkin Ground Bridge. Mr. David added a friendly amendment (that was agreed to by Mr. Brown) that the trapping only take place if the dam is annihilated.

Mr. David said the is the will of the commission because of the imminent threat to public safety and the dam being the cause of the flooding.

The vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

Film Student ~ Film student (name???) Wants to film a movie in the forest.
Bob Ford made a motion to approve this; it was seconded by Jim Brown. The Motion was passed unanimously.

Pavilion ~ Public works department is receiving inquires that the public would like to rent the pavilion Chad Esposito will come to a meeting to discuss this in further detail. The commission is in favor of having this like Short Beach and Boothe Park. Rental agreements and liability insurance needs to be discussed.

Frank mentioned that the pavilion is not complete. Frank will contact Chad Esposito/Tina Batoh regarding this issue.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made to adjourn at 6:03 pm. By Jim Brown and seconded by Pete Mariconda. Passed unanimously

The next regularly scheduled Roosevelt Forest meeting will be held on Wednesday, March, 23, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.