

Topsham Conservation Commission  
Minutes  
July 22, 2020  
5:00pm  
Remote Meeting on Zoom  
DRAFT

In attendance: Shana Stewart Deeds, Victor Langelo, Rod Melanson, Steve Pelletier, Raija Suomela

Rod emailed the details for logging in

1. Approval of [May 12, 2020 minutes](#).

Victor made motion to approve the minutes with Raija's additions. Steve seconded. All TCC members were in favor.

2. "Crazy" Worms (*Amyntas* worms native to Asia) potentially in municipal compost and wood chips.
  1. Discussion with staff about control.
  2. Possible control measures.

After confirmation by Gary Fish State of Maine DCAF and Justin Shlawain Maine Natural Areas Program, we were asked to report on iMap Invasives. But Justin wants to confirm the worm ID when they are mature first. Upon discovery, Raija immediately posted on the Topsham happenings Facebook group, but deleted the post due to concerns from TSWAF staff that they weren't first informed.

Informational sheet: <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/horticulture/crazyworms.shtml>

To do: Perhaps composting on a cement pad to start fresh.

They are very difficult to control after establishment. No simple solution for resolution. Raija sees them most in the wood chips pile. We need to prevent them from spreading if they are there.

These worms move fast ~ 2 miles in 2 weeks as opposed to ½ mile in a year according to Raija's research.

ID: gray/brown, wiggly, flat, white clitellum are Asian more aggressive

Red wigglers with raised clitellum are European and known throughout the State and are definitely in the compost though still aren't great for forests they are not a new, aggressive invasive that the *Amyntas* worms native to Asia would be.

**Action items:**

Steve will talk to (Rod and) Ed and talk about TCC taking samples and how important it is to ID and remediate the worms and to see if he is amenable to a discussion with TCC.

Steve will interact with Gary and Justin to confirm the id of these worms? We can also work with others if they are unable to confirm.

TCC needs to see if they are in the chips, mulch and compost. TCC would like to set up a protocol to ID and monitor these worms. TCC would like to educate TSWAF staff about these worms and have a sign at the transfer station. The Town may need to discontinue use of chips/compost if the worms have invaded.

Rod will add a link to the informational sheet to the TWSAF website after talking with Ed. We will also add it to the TCC webpage.

Rod reported that TSWAF Staff is now sending recyclables to be recycled. The cost of recycling has gone up. Glass jars are heavy, so they usually pick out the glass but right now it's 0 zort. We can talk to Ed if he comes to a meeting.

### 3. Invasive plant hot spots needing attention.

Since there won't be a common good day and students from Bowdoin to help with invasive plant removal, do we need to manage invasives as a TCC group.

In Mallett Woods we need to chop the knotweed.

We need to check the Foreside Field, Library, Head of Tide (HoT) Park sites to see if management is needed. There's bush honeysuckle on the HoT park site we can work on. It might be good to work there since public works will be working there this summer/fall.

**Action item:**

TCC will have an invasive management day to map the invasives and manage as needed on September 19<sup>th</sup> with the 20<sup>th</sup> as a rain date. Time and location TBD.

#### 4. Update from Planning Office

1. Head of Tide (HoT) Park – Rod updated us that HoT park is all permitted for the upstream boat launch and to get a dock likely in late September. Town will move the parking away from the river and reseed.
2. Crooker Zoning – the Planning Board meeting 07-21-20 went well, and the Zoom format allowed for comments. The Landowner/applicant will meet once per month. Comments are available online at <https://www.topshammaine.com/crooker>

The process is underway in a transparent way that is accepting comments. The Planning Board may look to TCC if new zoning ordinances are proposed. Rod will keep us posted.

3. July 29 Town Meeting [Ordinance Amendments](#).

Drive in Town Meeting at the Fairgrounds July 29 with yes or no colored voting sheets where attendants will walk up and down and count. The solar ordinance will be on the docket and includes a mitigation fee for the solar projects that negatively impact rural areas.

4. Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust conservation area along Androscoggin. Angela Twitchell (Executive Director of the BTLT) will join us at our next meeting and give updates regarding a possible conservation easement on the Middlesex Road property and the new property along the Androscoggin.

Other:

Be sure we add action items and anything we voted on into minutes.

Victor sent a map to Rod regarding Mallet Woods with the corner circled. TCC should write a monitoring report for the Mallet Woods Property. Rod feels it's good to formalize easement monitoring and how to follow up with land owners.

There are rules for outside gathering as a municipality, but we can meet outside at our discretion if we distance.

We can add 2020 minutes and agendas to town website, **Shana** will send to Rod to update.

There is a new assistant Town Manager, and IT was not a big part of the job description, finances was more of the role. He is strong in Community Education from Brunswick. He will join the Town in late August.

Every five years we should go through Town owned properties. These decisions were deferred to the TCC with Rich as a practice not a policy. **Action item:** Rod will prepare updated parcels we should review and comment on for a future meeting.

Maine Climate Council has working group recommendations out and are looking for public input. The surveys are available here: <https://climatecouncil.maine.gov/surveys> Victor will post the the TCC Facebook page and Rod will add to the TCC Town page.

**Action Items:**

We are all going to invite Topsham people to join TCC Facebook page (Titled 'Topsham Conservation') and make a post.

Victor made motion to adjourn. Steve seconded. All TCC members were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:20pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted for approval by Shana, Secretary.