

# **OLD ORCHARD BEACH CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

Monday June 9, 2025 7:00 PM

Town Hall

Members in attendance: Kimbark Smith, Mary Pat Donnellon, Barry Jackman, Charlie Backus, Cynthia Nye

Guest: Janet Anderson, Ocean Park Association (OPA) environment committee

## **1. Project Updates by Members**

**Composting at Loranger School** - Mary Pat and Cynthia reported a successful wrap up of year one, including an ice cream party for the Green Team provided by Fielder's Choice. About 25 students from 3rd and 4th grade are on the Green Team, led by 3rd grade teacher Sarah Wilder. Mary Pat also purchased Fielder's Choice gift cards for Cynthia to give to students in grades 6-8 who compost. Most 6th - 8th graders didn't compost; we hope to help them improve next year!

**Composting at the Transfer Station** - Mary Pat met with Diana Azanza, who suggested Casella on Valley Road for composting, since they have a program. Biddeford uses it, too. It involves an anaerobic digester system that is part of Ecomaine, the company we already use for recycling. Mary Pat and Tim met with Casella.

**Hemlock wooly adelgid predator beetle releases:** Cynthia reported that we released 2300 beetles in late May/early June, including 300 beetles donated to the school by the lab. Because we ordered with other organizations, we had a discount on the beetles and used the savings to cover more beetles and shipping and handling. The total cost was \$5,587.00. OPA paid \$1500 for Guild Park as part of a grant project. ConCom paid \$3,000. Students raised \$90 with a bake sale. The remainder was paid with grant money from GMRI awarded to the school for an ash and hemlock project with 5th grade and science enrichment.

Beetle release report:

- Guild Park: 500 beetles released by Cynthia and son Sam Nye. We found new green tips on hemlock branches, a positive sign.
- Jameson Woods: 300 beetles released by 5th grade classes with Cynthia
- Milliken South: 600 beetles released by Cynthia's science students
- Milliken North: 300 beetles released by Cynthia and Sam
- Blueberry Plains: 300 beetles released by Cynthia and Sam (new site)
- Eastern Trail by Mill Pond: 300 beetles released by Cynthia and Sam

**Milliken Mill Woods\* North Trail Work:** Kimbark has been working with Mark on moving trees and moving recently delivered lumber for the stream crossings. (*\*Mark K noted by email after the meeting that the name of this property is Milliken Mill Woods, specified by the family when the land was donated.*)

**Maine Trails grant application:** Kimbark and Mark have started the grant application to Maine Trails Program for support for a trail on the Ahearn property\*\* (*\*\*Mark K suggested by email that this property be named Ahearn Woods*) that was donated across the street from the new parking lot to the right. The trail has to cross a lot of wet ground. The application will include a proposed canoe launch on Mill Pond and one on Ross Road on the Pine Point end.

## **2. Good and Welfare**

Charlie Backus shared and summarized Maine conservation news reports:

- positive news about Atlantic Salmon returning to Maine rivers
- fewer brown-tail moth larvae this year
- Maine's Wildlife Protection Plan will be expanded to include endangered plant species as well as endangered animal species; primary state funding sources are secure for now
- New England Cottontail reintroduction has begun to be successful

Barry noted that work is underway in Memorial Park.

Barry will get an introduction to the new director of Oceanwood.

Mark Koenings has staked a trail and contacted CMP about building an ADA compliant trail across property near the solar farm. We hope and expect that this will eventually be built.

Kimbark is in talks with StanTech about treating phragmites in Jordan Park Marsh in mid-August. There are large patches in JPM, small patches in Randall Park Marsh and Ancona Marsh as well.

Charlie is meeting with Larry Mead to do water sampling for Maine Healthy Beaches and will talk with him about the possibility of planting a few American chestnut trees in Memorial Park. TBD whether the trees are Maine survivor tree

offspring or Chinese hybrids.

Janet Anderson from the OPA environmental committee told us there will be a community program in Guild Park on three Thursdays in July - the same program will be repeated three times - to tell people about the forest management plan for Guild Park. Dates: 7/10, 7/17, 7/24 at 7 pm.

Kimbark requested that Janet ask for volunteers to check that the tide gate is open when it is supposed to be.

Barry requested new contact information for beach profiling. Cynthia will provide.

State conservation group annual meeting in October in Brunswick. Speaker will be Doug Beck, who runs the Maine Trails program.

Fall Fest is happening again this year in late September.

We may not have a meeting in July.

Meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Minute submitted by Cynthia Nye

Kimbark G. Smith, Chair OOB Conservation Commission