

Open Space and Recreation  
Tuesday, February 28, 2023  
Meeting Minutes

Call to order at 6:08pm

Members present: Connie Afshar, Adam Norman, Alix White, Marisa Manley, Maryanne Wetherald, John McMahon  
Additional Attendees: Montanna Cassel, Jack Buckley

Connie Afshar, co-chair, asked for comments on the minutes from the January 17th meeting. There were no edits recommended and Maryanne Wetherald moved to approve the minutes. Adam Norman seconded. The motion was approved 6-0.

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **Cohasset Town Wide Composting Initiative**

Montanna Cassel, town resiliency and grant coordinator, presented the town wide composting initiative, which involves both Hull and Cohasset and will take place at Cohasset High School. In addition Cardinal Cushing School in Hanover will partner to collect the compost from residents in both towns. Montanna Cassel is currently working with MAPC (Massachusetts Planning Counsel) and the Center for EcoTechnology for both funding and technical support to get this off the ground. The long term goal of this initiative is to serve as a blueprint for other communities.

Montanna Cassel is also working with Black Earth Compost to try to get them to service Cohasset, but it is not within their zone currently. Separately, Black Earth may be willing to take landscaping compost from DPW bi-weekly, and Montanna is trying to work on that as well.

Maryanne Wetherald asked what are the benefits of composting. Montanna Cassel pointed out that composting will significantly reduce the amount of trash one is taking away. In addition the compost, if used on your lawn, will be more resilient against flooding and will increase the nutrition of your soil.

Connie Afshar, co-chair, pointed out that one of the committee goals has been to get curbside composting, and we should also try to continue to pursue Black Earth and get more residents signed up for either service.

Marisa Manley asked about the cost of the program to residents. Montana Cassel confirmed it would be completely free and residents can do a drop off every Saturday at the high school during preset hours.

Montanna Cassel is waiting for funding and then will ask the Open Spaces and Recreation Committee for help with promoting the new program once it is off the ground.

## **CSCR's GIS mapping program**

Jack Buckley informed the Open Spaces and Recreation Committee that CSCR is starting a new program to teach students how to use GIS (computer mapping). CSCR is currently looking at the Cohasset Open Spaces 7 year plan and is working on one of the goals outlined to identify current open plots of land in Cohasset for possible new open spaces for the town to acquire. The goal of the program is to equip students with the ability to help serve the town and its open space goals. Jack Buckley has 5 students, who are currently learning the Arc GIS online program.

Maryanne Wetherald mentioned that as a committee we have been looking to make trail maps of the town's trails for quite some time now, and it would be great if we can leverage these students to help build the trail maps. Jack Buckley seemed to suggest that they could look into that as a summer or fall program if students were interested.

Marisa Manley pointed out that the committee has also talked in the past about identifying open plots of land in the town to propose for purchase and for the Open Spaces and Recreation committee to come up with criteria for what would make a viable plot that would be an advantageous open space for the town.

Connie Afshar, co-chair, asked if the data then feeds into a GPS program. Jack Buckley commented that the only real difference is that the GIS programming has editing capacity.

Jack Buckley also pointed out that a discussion needs to be had about where the maps are stored and who has access once they are created. Jack Buckley asked if the Open Spaces and Recreation Committee can ask Ron Menard, town IT, to work on figuring this out. In addition there needs to be a protocol defined when there are issues with the system.

Maryanne Wetherald suggested that we regroup in a month after she has had a chance to check in with Ron Menard, town IT.

Jack Buckley let the Open Spaces and Recreation Committee know that they could drop into CSCR every Wednesday at 4pm if they would like to see the students working on the GIS programming.

## **Stop & Shop Food Waste App**

In the interest of time, Connie Afshar, co-chair, deferred this topic for a future meeting.

## **Cohasset Activities for Earth Day**

Maryanne Wetherald stated that Cohasset Recreation is anxious to hear our plans for Earth day this year and Adam Norman, co-chair, stated that Elder Affairs would like to publish something as well.

Marisa Manley suggested rather than buying tote bags this year we do a raffle to drive engagement and solicit prizes from the chamber businesses. Alix White stated that she is also willing to donate her painting notecards for prizes as well.

Connie Afshar, co-chair will contact Peter Pescatore, prior Open Spaces and Recreation Committee chair, for a checklist of everything that we need to do. Maryanne Wetherald will coordinate with the selectboard to get on one of their next agendas for approval of the event..

**Other Business:**

Maryanne Wetherald mentioned that the Conservation Committee is interested in buying 375 Beechwood and would like OSRC to weigh in. Maryanne Wetherald encouraged the committee to go check out the parcel of land, so that we can discuss this in an upcoming meeting.

The next OSRC meeting will be on 3/21

Connie Afshar, co-chair, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maryanne Wetherald seconded. The committee voted in favor 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marisa Manley