

**Public Meeting – Minutes**  
**Kent Conservation Advisory Committee**  
**May 17, 2017, 7:00 pm**  
**Kent Town Hall**

Attendees: Anne Balant-Campbell, Bill Buck, Marty Collins, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach, Bill Volckmann

Meeting was called to order 7:05 pm

***Chair's report***

KCAC chair Beth Herr met with Town Supervisor Maureen Fleming and environmental consultant Bruce Barber on March 17. A meeting of representatives of lake associations is planned for Saturday, May 20\*, 10:00 am at the Kent Town Hall. Bruce Barber and Maureen Fleming will lead the meeting. The new Kent Lakes Council is intended to share information, resources, and equipment among the various lake associations. Beth and Bill V. will attend.

The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation has announced requests for proposals for Hudson River Estuary Biodiversity Grants in two areas: Stormwater Management and Local Stewardship Management (e.g., creating natural resource inventory, open space inventory, or a plan to conserve natural resources. The deadline is July 12, probably too soon for the KCAC to be able to seek funding this year. These grant programs have a focus on conserving/improving water quality. In future, the KCAC might seek funding to conduct a natural resource inventory. Options include enlisting Hudsonia, a non-profit organization that has a team that helps municipalities, or collaborating with Clearpool, which could increase the probability of success in obtaining funding. Also, members of the Putnam County Fish and Game Club, headquartered at Oasis Sports, might support this effort due to an interest in monitoring about the status of native species (game birds, sport fish, aquatic plants).

Blue green algae are becoming an issue in local lakes due to waste and fertilizer run-off. The KCAC will share the granting opportunity with lake associations and Town Supervisor Maureen Fleming.

***Committee Reports***

***1. Outreach Communication Committee***

The Kent CAC Facebook page has been fairly active, with 92 regular followers. Attractive photographs get the most views. For example, 64 people view a recent posting with a photo of columbine. The Almanac is getting frequent "hits." The Facebook "event" created to advertise the Hawk Rock hike on May 21 has had a few hits. It also has been advertised in the local press.

At a recent meeting of the Putnam County Cooperative Extension, it was learned that the Putnam County Tourism Office, which has a new director, is creating an events page via electronic media. The liaison for this is Assistant Director Frank Smith who maybe re reached at 845-808-1015 or [frank.smith@putnamcountyny.gov](mailto:frank.smith@putnamcountyny.gov). Beth will follow up to find out how to share events via tourism office.

Twenty percent of those who follow the KCAC on facebook also follow the twitter account for Putnam County hikes, #hikeputnam.

Beth is involved in Swampsmart/Riversmart/Lakesmart via the Housatonic Valley Association. They are working on creating a Lake Smart initiative which Kent Lakes Council could embrace.

The Mount Nimham Fire Tower Facebook page has had a spike in viewership. A posting about the Nimham Mountain pow-wow reached 54 people. Beth will publicize the Hawk Rock hike via this facebook page as well.

People having been giving feedback about how much they love the Kent Nature Almanac. Beth will put the weblink for posting to the almanac on the facebook page so these individuals can post their own observations if they wish.

Kentcac.info and hikes email subscription lists have added a few members. The info list has close to 175 members, with a few more for the hikes. There are very few "bounces," of the notices that go out on these lists, suggesting that people are keeping their email addresses up to date.

Town of Kent website

Dave is posting our agendas and minutes. The rest of town website does not appear to be up to date. The "fake" town website operated by an unknown party is still there.

## ***2. Fire Tower Committee***

Bill V. and Beth attended an NYSDEC meeting in New Paltz for trail maintainers and other fire tower groups. Members of the Putnam Horse Council were also present. The DEC wants events with groups of more than 20 to give 72 hours notice to obtain permission. This is being enforced in the Catskill region. Jeff Ryder (who is Matt Paul's supervisor, and reports to Jeff Riegert) explained the reason for group limits. They want advance notice for any maintenance projects other than trash pickup, for insurance reasons. Most volunteer stewardship agreements do not allow power tools. KCAC has insurance for volunteers via the NYS employees workers compensation program. We must require proper sign-in and out. Minors need their guardians to sign for them. We must be meticulous in paperwork. The DEC will give us access to the materials that they presented at the meeting.

Ideas for engaging the community were discussed such as an overnight or a spring cleanup event. Per NYS rules, there are no fires permitted above 3,500 feet and no hiking above 4,000

feet. This is not an issue for us given the lower elevation at the fire tower. Campers who are asked to remove their debris usually comply.

Possible details of an overnight program at the fire tower were discussed. We would invite families to come at 3 PM with their own dinner. KCAC would provide a night hike, a morning hike and breakfast. Night hike activities could include:

- Walk with a UV lamp at night. Lichen and insects glow.
- Moth Ball – sheet and lights see what species you can get. They can be attracted with a beer banana slurry

Landing replacement plan - No updates

New and replacement name plates

Painting contractors

### ***3. Report from Kent Conservation Foundation***

One donation received.

### ***4. Hikes and Programs***

Hike the Horsepound Brook to Hawk Rock, Sunday, May 21, 11:00 AM

Water Worlds of White Pond Hike in June, or is it better to organize a Fire Tower Clean Up day? Sat., June 10 was chosen for this cleanup, which will include brush and log removal from chamber area and trash removal. Hours will be 8:00 AM-noon. Graffiti over-painting could be another day.

We will advertise on social media. Some young people have been drafted to help. It was suggested that KCAC ask town justices Peter Collins and Kevin Douchkopf to send youth who need community service due to previous infractions. Tools needed include: power equipment, brush mower, bags, gloves, and clippers. Bill will notify DEC. A single notice for advertising this event on all social media would be best. Beth will work on this with Bill. V.

Upcoming programs:

- “Testing the Waters”, Saturday, July 15, 11:00 AM for NYSDEC WAVE assessment (Water Assessments by Volunteer Evaluators)
- Nature Detectives, Kent Library, July 13, 20, 27 for 8-10 year-olds
- Thursday mornings, 1.5 hours in program room and in the woods. Hike Sat July 29. Or the following Sat. August 5
- 4H fair, last weekend in July. KCAC could have an interactive booth. There is a modest charge for the table on weekends. Details will be worked out at our next meeting. Beth will reserve space. Bill V. offered to help. The table can be covered in shifts by KCAC members.

### ***5. Environmental Leaders Learning Alliance (ELLA)***

No news, no meetings

### ***6. Clearpool***

No news, no meetings

Dave Ehnebuske pointed out that at Mead Farm, a tree on top of the chamber is getting large and could potentially collapse the chamber. KCAC will need to contact Lori DiLorenzo, DEP Regional Land supervisor, re the process to follow to obtain permission to take trees down. Typically, an OSHA level 1 chainsaw course is needed, and an EMT must be present. We paid (for an EMT?) last time. Bill V. could take the chainsaw training. Members discussed whether or not to cut fallen trees to improve trail access, which may also increase traffic by off-road vehicles. Dave will discuss this with Lori.

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 21, 7:00 PM at the Kent Town Hall.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:12 PM

\*The meeting was subsequently rescheduled to June 3.