

Public Meeting

Kent Conservation Advisory Committee

January 17, 2018, 7PM

Kent Town Hall

Minutes

Attendees: Beth Herr, Dave Ehnebuske, Bill Buck, Anne Balant-Campbell, Bill Volckmann,

1. The minutes of November 15, 2017 were approved.
2. Committee reports
 - a. Outreach
 - i. Kent CAC Facebook page: Some of the postings are being viewed by over 100 facebook members. Most are viewed by 40-125 people
 - ii. Mount Nimham Fire Tower Facebook page: A few new subscribers have been added.
 - iii. The Kent Nature Almanac now has over 160 subscribers
 - iv. Kentcac.info webpage has daily traffic of about 10-15 viewers.
 - b. Fire Tower Committee
 - i. All seven planned landing replacements have been completed. The last one was completed on Dec.6. The total volunteer hours for 2017 were 235.5, and volunteers traveled a total of 790 miles.
 - ii. The Digital Visitor Log Book is now complete. It is set up to prevent attacks and to allow removal of offensive posts (those reported as such by three individuals.) An etched metal sign showing the QR code will be attached to the fire tower, kiosks at trail heads, etc.
 - iii. Our NYSDEC Stewardship Agreement for the fire tower will expire in September 2018. Bill Volckmann will complete the paperwork for renewal, but with the Kent Conservation Foundation as the steward rather than the KCAC.
3. Kent Conservation Foundation report
 - a. Beth is working on revising the introductory presentation
 - b. The application for a grant in the amount of \$37,000.00 was submitted to NYS Parks and Trails Grant Program. Some additional information still needs to be submitted. Of the 30 groups that have region three agreements, we were the only one to submit a proposal. The KCF would have to raise 15 percent of the funding.
4. Hikes and programs.
 - a. The hike at Dill preserve went well. It took place before the snow. There were 12 attendees, three of whom were new to the hikes program. Beth did not schedule a New Years Day hike.
 - b. The committee brainstormed program ideas for this year, such as a firefly night or a solstice bonfire. Beth will develop a calendar of events for the next meeting.
5. Chair's report

- a. Marty Collins has informed Beth that she is stepping down from KCAC. Beth thanked her, and asked her to submit a letter to that effect for town records. Beth will inform supervisor Maureen Fleming. We will advertise the vacancy via our communications channels but will also welcome recommendations.
- b. The KCAC 2017 Annual Report for the town has been drafted. It describes the hikes, cleanup of the fire tower, Kent Community day, etc. Beth will send it out for the group to review.
- c. The KCAC annual report to DEC has been drafted. It includes descriptions of cleanup efforts at the tower, replacement of the landings, and bids to paint tower
- d. The KCAC annual report to DEP includes descriptions of trail work, removal of litter, public hikes, and downloadable maps.
- e. It is time to renew our five-year land-use permit with the NYS DEP. This is in process.
- f. Report from Cornell Cooperative Extension Advisory Committee meeting: The extension is promoting Shiitake mushroom farming in NYS – as per last meeting. There will be a training for farmers on Jan. 26 at the Cornell coop extension office. A group for small farmers will be meeting in Carmel next month. The extension is interested in hosting programs on shoreline buffer plantings. This would be of interest to the Lakes Committee. Their recent program on greenhouse tunnels had 25 attendees. There is a new troublesome pest for Norway Spruce.
- g. Upcoming meetings and events:
 - Kent Lakes Committee, meeting January 20, 9am
 - Blue-Green Algae Information Session, January 23, 9-11am, Bureau of Emergency Services, Carmel
 - Bedford 2020 Summit, February 3, Fox Lane High School Climate Action Summit. There will be speakers from Audubon etc.
 - Governor Andrew Cuomo identified two of our lakes, Lake Carmel and Palmer Lake, as two of the 12 priority lakes in the entire State to be part of a four-point initiative to combat harmful algal blooms, with \$65,000,000.00 dedicated to that objective.
 - The next Model Forest meeting at Clearpool will be in March.
- g. It was proposed that the KCAC speak with Town Highway Superintendent Richard Othmer re the use of salt on the roads and possibility of an equipment upgrade to allow application of brine solution. Possibly the use of brine could save money as well as mitigate environmental impact. Beth had run a conference on road treatments in the past. Excess salinity can result in deformed amphibians. Carey Institute in Millbrook is hosting a program on this issue. Dave will speak with Rich about this possibility.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7pm on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at the Kent Town Hall, 25 Sybil's Crossing, Kent Lakes, New York. All meetings of the Kent CAC are open to the public.