

**AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVER COMMISSION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 20, 2014**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Al Floyd	Albert Grant	Jim Halloran
Barbara Sherman	Dick Sherman	Tom Talamini
Deb Talamini	Scott Tripp	

ABSENT:

Alan Baker	Joanne Drapeau	Ken Francis
Sue Gaffney	Ray Jones	
Lois Noble	Dick Sullivan	

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:08 PM
2. **MINUTES** of Regular January 16, 2014: Member Jim Halloran revised the Added Agenda item 5d to be:
“ *Added: Tree Cutting on Trails Workday – Member Jim Halloran raised the issue of cutting down free standing dead wood. As a commission and as stewards of Melrose State Park we should not cut down trees whether alive or dead. The state gave us permission to maintain a trail system with the agreement that we would not cut down trees. Trees both alive and dead provide habitat for wildlife, thus we should protect and not destroy this habitat. Member Alan Baker reported that he will be attending a CT Forest & Parks seminar which will present techniques of what to do and what not to do in trail work. It is on February 2 and he invited others to join him.*” After discussion, minutes with revision were approved.
3. **ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:** 5. e. Parks & Recreation Meeting; 5. f. Report on CT Forest & Park Workshop; 5. g. Water Testing Program request
4. **ON-GOING / OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. River Review – Normal winter conditions.
 - b. Water testing – The 2 new meters will be used if the water is open and can be accessed safely.
 - c. Scantic River State Park Trail – There are really good snowshoeing conditions and it is being used by many. A beaver has taken down a small oak tree.
 - d. Window decals – No new sales = 44 unsold.
 - e. January Work Party – Member Jim Halloran lassoed the posts that were pulled up and tossed in the river. Then several members replanted them and installed the kiosk. Member Deb Talamini suggested that information as to the upcoming CT Trails Day hike be posted there, and also other area hikes. Chair reported to the Deputy Chief the mischief at the kiosk area and the DC will instruct patrols to pay additional attention to the site. Member Alan Baker will get a different lock that has extra keys so more members can post items of interest at the kiosk. Plans to install a sign on back side visible from parking area are in the works.
 - f. Patch Blog / Facebook – No current blogs but Facebook has been continually updated with pictures including those of people snowshoeing. Kiosk has been mentioned. Member Deb Talamini hoped to contact the Hartford Courant to have our trails put into the ET section which has an on-going column on outdoor spots for hiking, etc.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. February / March work party – Members plan to monitor the snow melt conditions and weather permitting will put together a work party by email contact. Project will be to secure the mudwalks and bridges with cable to prevent them from floating away should there be high water come snow melt. .
- b. SRWA – March 29, 2014 is the Spring Splash.
- c. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Deb Talamini reported that there was a balance of \$326.36 in our "savings" account which constitutes the proceeds of the sales of the decals and any donations that have been received. At the New Year's Day hike, a member of the 5 Corner Cupboard was present to take the donations of cash and food items so

the money was never in the custody of the Commission.

- d. New Idea for Benches – Member Deb Talamini showed a picture of benches used at Northwest Park. They are planted in the ground to make them permanent with a simple design. After discussion as to the materials needed, it was agreed that several could be made. The current ones would still used at various sites.
- e. **ADDED: Parks & Recreation Meeting** – Vice Chair Tom Talamini suggested that we regularly attend its meetings. It was noted that Melissa Maltese had hoped to attend out meeting tonight. Per the Town calendar, the Parks & Recreation Commission meets every other month on the 2nd Monday with the next scheduled meeting being March 10, 2014.
- f. **ADDED: CT Forest & Park workshop** – Member Jim Halloran reported that he and member Alan Baker attended the workshop with their wives, who are active volunteers. One specific topic of interest was the proposed Statute SB70 not to allow the state to sell some park lands to developers and not preserve them. Member Alan Baker urged the State to adopt this proposal. Members talked about adding their approval of this proposal and hoped all that were interested in this topic would get letters out to their local senators and representatives asking for their strong support in passing this proposal, to not allow the sale of recreation land.

Also at the workshop was information on how to market trails. Member Jim felt we were doing a good job of letting people know about our trails with our newspaper articles and posting on Facebook. A suggestion was made to posting some local establishments on the kiosk to help those not too familiar with the area to find a restaurant after using the trail. Discussion took place that perhaps some local businesses might want to buy decals and then publicize that they support the AHRC. In turn we could list their names on the kiosk.

Members Jim and Alan were thrilled with the tools on display. The workshop had ideas of trail development and Laurie Giannotti of the CT State Parks and Trails Program suggested that the Commission members map the entire State Park with possible future trails and then it be submitted for approval all at once instead of little at a time. Ms. Giannotti subsequently inquired about our benches as to the type and number and asked if more were to be placed.

- g. **ADDED: Requested Water Testing Information** – Chair received a phone call from Jacqueline Talbot of the CT River Watershed Council. She asked about our water testing program. After talking to Member Alan Baker, Chair decided that Ms. Talbot should be directed to Dr. Kirsten Martin who is heading the water testing and would have all the answers.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Sherman – 2/25/2014