

**OFFICIAL MINUTES: Business Meeting**  
**Eliot Conservation Commission**  
**Eliot, Maine 03903**

**DATE: January 3, 2024**

**OFFICERS:**

**Chair: Kari Moore**

**Vice Chair: Lisa Wise**

**Secretary: Lynn Bublely**

**Treasurer: Peter Egelston**

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON AND ONLINE

**1. 6:00 PM Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order with roll call at 6:05 PM by Lisa Wise. In attendance: Kari Moore-remote (Chair), Lisa Wise (Vice Chair), Lynn Bublely (Secretary), Peter Egelston- remote (Treasurer), David Marshall- remote (Member), Richie Kaknes (Member)

**2. Public Input:**

There is no public present or on-line at this meeting.

**3. Review and approve past minutes:**

11/1/2023 meeting minutes are approved unanimously pending edits. 12/6/2023 meeting minutes are approved. Kari Moore made a motion to accept, and Lisa Wise seconded the motion. The minutes are unanimously accepted pending edits. 11/27/2023 special meeting minutes will need further amendments and will be reviewed at the February 2024 meeting.

**4. Financial Update:**

Peter reports no expenditure since our last meeting. The Eliot Conservation Commission (ECC) will await information from Mike Sullivan regarding the budget request put forth to the town.

**5. Open Space Plan Update (Abbie Sherwin- Coastal Resilience Coordinator from Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, SMPDC)**

Abbie currently is helping Eliot with its planning efforts as it relates to grant application for the Piscataqua River Estuaries Partnership (PREP) grant for the open space update. Abbie presents to us draft map options that might be used in the Eliot Open Space Plan (EOSP). Abbie presents maps with different layer options that can be overlaid with specific data (watersheds, farms, vernal pools, for example.) Abbie would like us to think about what we see as the goals for the EOSP and brainstorm how we would like the purpose and objectives of the plan to be defined. The existing plan prioritizes focus areas and with that, the past working group produced a definition for EOSP. Abbie presents 3 sample definition plans from Windham ME, focusing on existing open space, Redfield ME, focusing on identifying potential future needs of the next decades, and Portsmouth NH, which has a strong

focus on improving public access and connecting and prioritizing potential open space along with climate resilience objectives Kari favored the Portsmouth wording due to Eliot's lack of accessibility to our public lands. Peter commented on the potential assets and identification of undeveloped land for acquisition, explicitly protecting privately held land. Lisa comments on recreational spaces and whether these lands should be included in the plan. We will look for input from Jeff Brubaker. David states recreational spaces might not need to be included and talks of the importance of climate adaptation in the EOSP. Richie asks what did Eliot look like in 2010 when the EOSP was developed? Were any of the plans implemented? Should we reach out to former crafters of the plan? Richie suggests adding wildlife to the EOSP mapping. Mentioning the New England Cottontail and its habitat. Is the cottontail still viable? Kari will reach out to Kim Richards, ECC Chair in 2010. Lisa Wise was instrumental in writing the grant. Abbie reviews the timeline document and Eliot Open Space Plan (EOSP) update process. Richie mentions forests. Do we have a plan to consider the forests in Eliot? Kari directs Richie to the ECC website where there is a forest management plan online. Abbie also asks if we would want to have the information on the maps clipped only to Eliot, or to cross boundaries into neighboring towns when applicable. After discussion, a decision was made to include neighboring towns. The next step is for SMPDC to start to create draft maps to be used for community workshops or community involvement. SMPDC will create these maps over the winter and will be completed at the end of the winter. We will continue to update progress on the EOSP tracking worksheet from the 2010 plan and to continue updating our inventory of town owned land.

## **6. Project Development/Permit Review/Planning Studies**

No new applications have been presented to the ECC. Kari reached out to Jeff Brubaker about how the applications make their way to the ECC. Jeff is working on a better process to get plans to the ECC.

**0 Passamaquoddy Lane-** Kari did send to the Planning Board our comments on the Japanese Knotweed invasive species. The project went to the Planning Committee where they gave their approval to the plan with conditions to remove the Japanese Knotweed without spread.

## **7. Education/ Outreach**

Richie reports that he will be attending the York County Invasive Species Working Group. Peter reports that the Piscataqua River Watershed meeting is postponed until sometime later this month 1/24/2024. David reports that the York River December meeting presentation was by the Mid Coast Coastal Heritage Trust. The topic was saltmarsh restoration. Restoration is in need due to climate changes and farming practices. Ditches and embankments have formed to trap water in this species rich environment creating mud flats.

## **8. Round Table**

David spoke with Jane Brekke at Great Works Regional Land Trust. She will investigate the parcel that is for sale near York Pond. Currently, there are no active parcel projects in Eliot. In doing research, David discovers the Land Bank did exist in 2000. He will continue his look back. Kari reports getting an email from 663 River Road asking the ECC to investigate the destruction of trees and

wetland. Kari did reach out to Shelley Bishop, Code Enforcement Officer, who made a site visit and determined that it did not appear that any wetlands were being destroyed. Shelley could not find any violations. Peter asks what the criteria for wetlands was. Kari directed him to the Maine Wetlands factsheet.

**9. Next Regular Business Meeting**

Lisa made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kari. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:47 PM. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday February 7, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bublely

Secretary

CC: Eliot Town Clerk, Commission Members, Commission File