



TOWN OF NORWELL

345 Main Street
Norwell, MA 02061

Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) Implementation Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 5:00 pm
in person and via Zoom

Committee Members present: Wendy Bawabe, Fred Bousquet, Heather Hanley, Stacy Minihane, Ilana Quirk, Will Saunders, and Marynel Wahl

Committee Members not present: John diFrisco, George Grey, Justin Ivas, and Steve Ivas

The meeting was **called to order** by Wahl at 5:01 pm.

Ms. Wahl announced that all votes will be roll call votes as some of the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting is being recorded and the audio file will be available upon request. It was noted that this meeting will be conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq extended to March 31, 2025.

The **agenda** was accepted as written. (*Wahl motioned, Quirk seconded, all in favor*)

The **minutes** for the July 26, 2023 meeting were approved as written. (*Quirk motioned, Minihane seconded, all in favor*)

Saunders updated the Committee on his recent conversation with Abraham Monahan from [Bartlett Tree Experts](#) in Hanover regarding **Beech Leaf Disease (BLF)**. Abraham noted that Bartlett has had very good results over the last two years with their foliar fungicide treatment of Beech trees. Unfortunately, they are not looking for trees on which to try out the treatment (they have plenty) so the Town cannot get any free treatments by being part of a sample group. Bartlett recommends two treatments/year, and each treatment is \$300/tree, and they treat trees between July and October. Saunders is asking the Conservation Commission to choose 5 specimen Beech trees on Town land as soon as possible so that we can get a single treatment done this year before October. It was noted that the Conservation Fund can be used to pay for this treatment. CPC funds cannot be used as tree work is considered ongoing maintenance. It was noted that Bartlett should examine the chosen trees before treatment begins to ensure they are not either already infected with Beech Bark Disease or at the end of their natural lifespan.

Abraham also noted that Bartlett is petitioning the Commonwealth to allow them to use a controlled chemical for injection in Beech trees—one that has effectively treated Dutch Elm Disease. This chemical (called Arbotect—thiabendazole hypophosphite) could be a more cost-effective solution for future treatments.

When asked if the Town woodlands infected with BLF could be forested (and, therefore, dying trees could be removed without the Town having to pay for their removal), Saunders noted this could be an option for the future. On a positive note, he said that Abraham from Bartlett Tree said that when the Beech trees die, the understory will get more light and native Black Birch trees will grow. This is a small piece of good news within this dire situation.

The priority **Action Item** for this meeting is:

NATURAL RESOURCES & BIODIVERSITY:

5.19 Develop an invasive species educational campaign. (Stacy Minihane, Lead)

Other ideas for invasive species management—beyond educating the public—were discussed. 1) Creating an invasives pile at the Town Recycling Center was deemed untenable by the Town Administrator and the Highway Surveyor. 2) Creating signage at the Town Yard Waste pile noting “invasives are forbidden” was considered a waste because it would likely be ignored. Therefore, it was determined that educating the public about invasives and the danger they pose is the most effective “method of treatment.”

Minihane distributed information that she gathered regarding possible next steps for an educational campaign. She suggests the following:

1. **Creating an Invasive Species Informational Series** which includes the following components:
 - a. Flyers that would go into Water bills or Tax bills. Each flyer could highlight an invasive species that is best removed around the time of the mailing (i.e., Bittersweet in November, Black Swallow-wort in September, Garlic Mustard in April/May). She suggested we come up with an interesting name for the series such as “Not Every Plant is Created Equal.” Members should think about possible names, but a quick Google search comes up with the following ideas: “The Low-Down on Invasive Species,” “Beware of Aliens,” “Intruder Alert!”, “Stop the Invasion!”
 - b. Classroom visits educating students about invasive species
 - c. April/Earth Day Presentation on invasives at the Norwell Public Library
2. **Collaboration with [Wild Cohasset](#)**, a non-profit whose mission is to combat invasives on the South Shore. Flyers and information online can use QR codes to direct people to Wild Cohasset’s website—an existing online source of facts (we don’t need to re-invent the wheel!)
3. **Boot brushes at trail heads** which could be a possible Eagle Scout or Senior Work project. These [boot brushes](#) clean footwear to remove seeds or invasive species that may be on your shoes.

It was noted that a ½ page flyer cost \$259 to be inserted in the Town bills. The Committee would like to do a full-page flyer. Wahl noted that ConCom has approved \$2,500 for an annual invasives mailing budget. Minihane and Bawabe will work on the flyers.

Priority **Action Items** for the next meeting on Wednesday, September 27th is:

WATER:

1.3 Public Outreach for Water Conservation & Education (Steve Ivas, Lead)

The meeting was **adjourned** at 6:02 pm. (*Wahl motioned, Minihane seconded, all in favor*)

It was decided that the next meeting would be on **Wednesday, September 27th at 5:00 pm** via Zoom and in person at the Conservation Offices at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Bawabe, OSRP Implementation Committee

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY	DONE
Send final minutes from 7/26/23 to Town Clerk	Bawabe	✓
Identify important Beech trees on Town-owned property	ConCom	
Think about a great name for the Invasives Species Info Series!	EVERYONE	
Tell ConCom about boot brush idea and keep in mind for Eagle Scout or senior work	Wahl/Saunders	
Work on the Invasives Species Info Series flyers	Minihane & Bawabe	
Post the next meeting	Wahl	
NOTED FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS, STILL TO BE WORKED ON...		
Write a proposal to Phil Benjamin (or his successor)	Saunders	
Send bench specs to Bawabe for Branding Guidelines	Saunders	
Create an online document listing small Town projects that could be eligible for grants. Share this doc with appropriate parties and Committees.	Wahl	
Continue to work on Branding Guidelines	Bawabe	
Consider historic properties in town and send email to Bawabe regarding your “Top Five” for Façade Preservation	EVERYONE	
Review the competing lists of land categories and try to get a better number of preserved Town land	Grey & Saunders	