Trumbull Nature Commission Virtual Meeting  
Tuesday, March 15, 2022  
7:30 pm

Present: Chairman Emily Shufrin, Commissioners Jack Boynton, Olia Yelner and Karen Laracca

Also Present: Sheryl Baumann and Kevin Malone from TNAC

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mrs. Shufrin followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment
Scot Kerr, 12 Lindburg Road, Patrons of the TNAC Board member, spoke in support of the TNAC noting he has been involved with the group for approximately eight years. There has been much progress over that time through the efforts of Kevin and Sheryl driving them forward. They have reached the point where they are slightly limited by the facilities and what can be provided to families and schools as they come visit. It is time for the Town to pay more attention to the property and the building. He realizes he has the Commission’s support. He encouraged that it be made a priority to request the Town put aside funding to make the necessary improvements to the facility so they can continue to provide excellent programs.

Past Minutes
Motion was made by Mr. Boynton to approve the minutes of December 14, 2022 as written. Seconded by Ms. Yelner and approved with an abstention from Ms. Larracca.

Old Business
1. Funding – Mrs. Shufrin noted they have received the grant for $75,000 for this year from the Department of Economic and Community Development Office of the Arts Directed Local Funds Grant. They will also receive $75,000 next fiscal year to be used for operating purposes. This is a renewable grant so they can apply again in the future.
2. Butterfly Garden/Sunflower Garden Update – Ms. Baumann shared a video about the Nature Center grounds which discussed the changes/update to both gardens, removal of invasives in those areas and what is available to the community on the property to enjoy. It also discussed some of the programs provided at various times of the year. This video will be shared with the Trumbull Rotary Club at their meeting on April 1.
3. Roof/Flashing – has not been addressed.

New Business
1. Karen Laracca was introduced as a new member of the Commission. Olia Yelner was welcomed back and both were thanked for their participation on the Commission.
2. The TNAC budget meeting is scheduled for 3:45 to 4:00 pm on March 22, 2022.
3. On February 2, Mrs. Shufrin reached out to First Selectman Tesaro, Maria Pires and Cindy Katske to explore town funding options. She requested information on ARPA funding which is the relief effort funding to help with the grounds. From that discussion, it was determined there were
four key areas to be reviewed. Mr. Estrada, who is in charge of Building and Grounds, will develop a budget. The key areas were identified by Ms. Baumann and Mr. Malone as follows:

a. The retaining wall by the lower garage - removal and regrade
b. Address the handicap access ramp – to inspect and replace/repair
c. Roof inspection and/or replacement
d. Exterior doors

Mr. Boynton noted Mr. Estrada thought he would be able to address the retaining wall with his own equipment but after further consideration, it is not possible. He will follow up with him prior to the budget meeting on March 22. The Commission also needs to know where the funding will be coming from – TNAC or a line item in Mr. Estrada’s Building and Grounds budget.

**TNAC Q&A**

Mrs. Baumann shared her report with the Commissioners and it is attached to the minutes. She noted the following:

1. The street sign is being replaced and will include premade messages that can be changed during the year that slide in instead of individual letters. This is part of the grant funding.
2. Grant funds were also used for clearing the property, removal of the spruce tree, trimming of the maple tree and future fertilization as well clearing of the meadow and the two new gardens.
3. New programs include:
   a. TNAC Trail Tails in April that speaks about feelings. The Trumbull Counseling Center and TPAUD will be partners in this program.
   b. Earth Day Program on April 16.
   c. Collaborative program with the Trumbull Library on April 23.
   d. Science Adventure Passport Program – participants will do various science experiments on the trail and get a passport stamped. It is designed to get families outside and learning about science.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, motion was made by Ms. Yelner to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm. Seconded by Mr. Boynton and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk
Subject: Report to Nature Commission: March 2022

**TNAC Building and Grounds:**
- **Building**
  - Upon his request, the Patrons provided George Estrada with a list of 4 top priorities for the building:
    - **Retaining walls by lower garage:** Remove and regrade, as previously discussed at our in-person meeting in 2021.
    - **Handicap access ramp:** Inspect, repair and/or replace per previous discussion.
    - **Roof inspection and replacement:** Inspect roof to determine necessary repairs. There is evidence of water leaking through the ceiling in the building interior. Also some flashing has blown off and the weather vane is breaking into pieces and falling onto the surrounding ground.
    - **All exterior doors:** Inspect and replace as necessary. The outside door between the basement retaining walls is in particularly rough shape, as it has numerous holes that can be breached by wildlife.
      - George is to obtain price quotes for the above projects
- **Grounds**
  - Large maple tree at front of building was trimmed, and will be fertilized at the end of April
  - Dead spruce tree near pond was removed
    - Both projects are being paid for by the Patrons of TNAC
  - The TNAC street sign is being refurbished and altered
    - The old sign has been removed and a renewed sign is due to be installed in April
      - The sign will have pre-printed interchangeable message panels rather than slide-in letters
        - This project is being paid for by the Patrons of TNAC

**Education:**
- Grade 2 program is scheduled at 4 Trumbull elementary schools
- Kindergarten Life Cycles program scheduled at 5 Trumbull elementary schools
- Tashua Grade 3 Pond Ecology program is scheduled 4/6 and 4/8
- Frenchtown K visit is scheduled 3/18 and 3/23
- Tashua Grade 4 field trip to TNAC scheduled 6/6
- Stepaway preschool age 5’s field trip to TNAC scheduled for 4-27-22
- Sandy Hook School Kindergarten field trip to TNAC tentatively scheduled for 4-21-22
- Goddard School Kindergarten in-school visit 5-23-22
- Black Rock pre-K in-school visit 6-2-22
- Ten Bridgeport grade 1 nature exploration in-school visits
- Six Bridgeport grade 3 pond ecology in-school visits
- Henkel to provide a Sustainability Ambassador program to one of Trumbull’s elementary schools
Program Outreach

- Programs held
  - Wallingford Library - maple sugaring
  - Sunrise of Fairfield – beekeeping
- Mobile Maple Sugaring program scheduled:
  - 3-17-22 Trumbull Senior Center
- Mobile Beekeeping program scheduled:
  - 3-24-22 Maplewood in Orange
  - 3-29-22 Bryant School Family Activity Night
  - 4-29-22 for Spring Meadows Trumbull

Town of Trumbull

- Board of Finance Budget Hearing for the Nature Commission scheduled for Tuesday, March 22nd 3:45pm – 4:00pm
  - Sheryl to speak on the Patrons' behalf
- The First Selectman's budget was released 3-7-22
  - Budget for 2022-23 is $5,128 which is a reduction from 2021-22’s budget of $5,420

Programs Held:
- Maple sugaring demo and tasting was held on 2-26-22
- St. Patrick's Day Rainbow Search and Take-Home Clover Pot was held 3-13-22

Upcoming Programs – Spring 2022
- 4-22-22 TNAC Trail Tales: Little Mole Has Hope
  - Trumbull Counseling Center’s Robin Bieber will lead a discussion with participating families of pre-schoolers, and will be giving out Gizmo mental health books
  - TPAUD will be giving out mental health coloring books
  - TNAC will provide a lesson on moles and spring
- 4-16-22 Earth Day and Community Mural Project Unveiling
  - St. Joseph’s High School student Danielle Haniph to give mural presentation
  - Mark to talk about seeds and the meadow
  - Participants to scatter seed bombs and plant seed plugs
  - Tree climbing demonstration, touch a bucket truck, and tree planting by Bartlett Tree Experts
  - Children’s craft - TBD
  - Tree seedlings to all participants provided by Bartlett Tree Experts
  - Make a Wish to have an informational table at the event
- 4-23-22 Community Mural Project Trumbull Library Unveiling
  - Note: Danielle is making 2 murals. The mural in the library will be displayed during the month of April
  - Danielle to give mural presentation
  - Participants to make a collage with recycled National Geographic magazines
  - Children’s book reading and discussion of “Maybe Something Beautiful”
- 4-30-22 TCW Shredding Event
- 5-12-22 – 6-30-22 Little Green Thumb Junior Gardener 8-Week Program
- 5-14-22 Fishing 101
- 5-21-22 Volunteer Day at TNAC
  o Beautification to include planting annual flowers around the TNAC signs and property
- 6-11-22 Intro to Archery
- 6-25-22 Great Firefly Roundup

Scouts
- Eagle Scout candidate Matt Tyburski
  o Firepit project
- Daniels Farm School Daisies
  o 4-30-22 Planting program to be instructed by Pam Roman
  o Follow-up program to be held later in spring
- Earth Rocks! Program for cub scouts to be held March 29

Business Interns
- After an interview process with Trumbull High School business students, two students were selected to participate in a TNAC internship program
  o Sophomore Aya Otorova and Junior Jackson Marsh are working with the Patrons’ Treasurers and Director to categorize expenses in a grant funds tracking sheet, and to do accounting tasks in QuickBooks
    ▪ This internship program has been endorsed by Business Teacher Katelyn Southard at THS
    ▪ If they volunteer for enough hours, they will get internship credit

Fundraising
- The Patrons will be presenting to the Trumbull Rotary Club on April 1st

See Program Flyer on next 2 pages

Submitted by:
Sheryl Baumann
Patrons of the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center
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TNAC Late Winter/Spring Program
Registration is Open Now!

Did you know the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center has been providing environmental education programs to Trumbull students and families for over 10 years?

Join us for fun and affordable outdoor nature programs, including our Earth Week events, see back for more info!

Space is limited, register soon at: trumbullnatureandartscenter.org

MAPLE SUGARING DEMO & TASTING
Saturday, February 26, Morning & Afternoon Sessions
• Learn how maple trees are tapped, and watch as the sap runs from our majestic sugar maple tree.
• We'll take a short walk to the fire pit to observe the evaporation process. All participants will get to taste a sample of real Connecticut maple syrup.
Fun for all ages
Cost: $15 per family of up to 5
Registration required

ST. PATRICK’S DAY RAINBOW SEARCH AND TAKE HOME CLOVER POT
Saturday, March 12, Morning & Afternoon Sessions
• Each family will use a map to find the 7 colors of the rainbow along our trails. At each stop they will locate objects that have significance in Irish culture and history.
• After their walk, families will receive lucky clover seeds, potting soil and a small pot to decorate and take home. One clover kit will be given to each family along with “gold” coins for the wee ones.
Fun for all ages
Cost: $15 per family of up to 3 adults and 3 children
Registration required

TNAC TRAIL TALES: “LITTLE MOLE FINDS HOPE”
Friday, April 22, 10:00am - 11:00am
We’ll take a walk along the TNAC trails to read each posted page of the uplifting book, “Little Mole Finds Hope”.
• Robin Bieber, MA, LMFT at Trumbull’s Mary J. Sherach Counseling Center will lead a chat about why Little Mole was feeling sad and why we may be feeling sad too. We’ll talk about ways your child can feel hopeful, followed by a mindfulness meditation session.
• Mark Ceneri, TNAC’s Lead Environmental Educator, will teach us all about moles and signs of spring.
• Each family will receive the book, “Gizmo’s Pawesome Guide to Mental Health”.
For ages 3 - 6, and caregiver
Cost: FREE
Registration required

LITTLE GREEN THUMB JUNIOR GARDENER
8 SESSION PROGRAM
Thursdays, May 12 - June 30 9:00am - 10:00am
When children grow their own plants from seeds, they’re so proud of their accomplishment! They learned to wait patiently as the seeds they sowed with their own hands have grown into a tall leafy plant they can enjoy and share with their family.
• Children will learn how to plant and take care of their garden from seed to harvest.
• Along with their flower and vegetable garden, we’ll do a different activity each week which will include nature hikes, science experiments and crafts, plus a planting project to take home.
For ages 3 - 6, plus caregiver
Cost: $144 for 8 sessions
Registration required

FISHING 101
Saturday, May 14, 9:00am - 12:00pm
• Learn all you need to know to get started fishing.
• Find out how to choose the right bait, and where to find the best local fishing areas.
• Our instructor will display and explain various types of rods and reels for different types of fishing.
• Practice casting and fishing in the TNAC pond.
• Bring your own equipment, if available. Instructor will teach you how to use the equipment you may already own.
• Some equipment will be available to borrow
Ages 6 and up, with adult
Cost: FREE
Registration required

INTRO TO ARCHERY
Saturday, June 11, 9:00am - 11:00am
• This program is led by experienced CT DEEP instructors on TNAC’s great lawn.
• All participants will have multiple opportunities to shoot arrows using beginner archery equipment.
• Instructors will work with each child to improve aim and accuracy.
For children ages 7 and up
Cost: FREE
Registration required
The Trumbull Nature & Arts Center celebrates the Trumbull Community!

“Trumbull Soars as One”
Two magnificent soaring bird murals created by St. Joseph High School student Danielle Haniph and the artwork of dozens of local children. On view in April at TNAC and the main branch of the Trumbull Library.

FREE events for the entire family this April!
Crafts, Free Giveaways, Outdoor Fun, No Registration Required.

Earth Week: Family Nature Fun at TNAC

Saturday, April 16 11am - 2pm
Trumbull Nature & Arts Center
- Unveiling of “Trumbull Soars as One” mural at TNAC
- Make seed bombs and plant seed plugs in the TNAC meadow
- Bartlett Tree Experts will be demonstrating tree climbing, plus: touch-a-bucket-truck, tree seedling giveaway and tree planting
- Make and take craft for kids

Earth Week: Art Celebration at the Trumbull Library

Saturday, April 23 11am - 12pm
Trumbull Main Library
- Unveiling of “Trumbull Soars as One” mural at the Trumbull Library
- Book reading by a Trumbull librarian of the inspiring celebration of art, “Maybe Something Beautiful”
- Express your creativity by making a colorful collage from recycled magazines

Coming Later This Year: Science Adventure Passport!
A world of scientific discovery awaits at TNAC!

TNAC is supported by the Patrons of the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. contact@trumbullnatureandartscenter.org | 203.452.4421

SPRING 2022