

Minutes of Conservation Advisory Council

8 January 2026 Meeting in the Clarence Town Hall

Cheryl Cantlon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Present: Steve Diver, Ron Walkowiak, Barbara Maisch, Paul Shear, Bob Altieri, Casey Diederich, Cheryl Cantlon, Bob Geiger, Chick Bernier

Visitor: Owen Shifflet from CHS Environmental Club

Absent: Lori Sauls, Joel Radder, Dennis Londos

Updates

Financial Report:

- Approximately \$117 left over in 2025 budget because the library presentation was cancelled due to weather at the end of December 2025.

Bob Altieri updates:

- Grant from NYS for \$675,000 was secured plus \$80,000 from a State Councilman for the new playground to be installed at the Clarence Town Hall.

Paul Shear Updates:

- Paul gave an update that 222 deer were taken in 2025.

Clarence High School Environmental Club

- Owen talked to Mrs. Murdoch about various events to be done in concert with the Council; there are many new members joining and potentially available for events.

Old Business

Winterfest 2026:

- Sat. Jan. 24th 12-3pm. Chick and Ron volunteered to work at a table, several others might attend.
- Cheryl presented a hand cart to be purchased for use in carrying bins; the Council approved purchase.
- The Council approved purchase of approximately \$40 worth of flower seeds as giveaways at tabling events.
- Andrew Shafer (Town Junior Planner) was able to make new trail maps for the Nature Center trails; maps will be given out during Winterfest.

Headlamp Hike:

- Jan 31st 5pm-7pm CCAC will have a table. Volunteers will be needed.
- Discussion of a fire pit – as long as someone can man the fire pit, it should be approved.

- Discussion of lighting needs for the parking area, and also small milk jug lighting with candles along the trails. Both of these will be done for the hike. Rather than having a golf cart for anyone with accessibility issues, we will have people with extra needs park actually at the Nature Center, with everyone else parking along the main driveway across from the mulch piles.

Mark Cara Presentation:

- Was meant to be on December 29th 1pm at the library (live animal demo including tortoises and speaking about diversity). It was cancelled due to weather. Rescheduled for February 20th at 1:30pm (President's Break). For the December event 85 people had already signed up.

Open House 2026

- April 25, 2026. Discussion around timing; decided it would be 10am – 1pm.
- Need to decide which organizations we want invite. Possible groups include:
 - o Hawk Creek (already booked for a presentation)
 - o NYSDEC
 - o Nature Conservancy
 - o WNY Land Conservancy
 - o Buffalo Niagara Land Trust
 - o PRISM
 - o BNWaterkeeper
 - o Youth Bureau
 - o Rotary
- Hawk Creek can either do 30 or 60 minute presentations. The Council decided to just have Hawk Creek give a 60 minute presentation and there would be no need to invite any others to present.
- Ron suggested that given it will be Arbor Day, he could suggest some arborists that might present.
- There was a discussion around whether or not to give away tree seedlings this year. Last year plants were given away and they were popular. The Council agreed that plants were a good idea and Cheryl will have plenty of perennials ready to give away by April. It was agreed that we would not give trees out this year.

Trail Marking at the Nature Center

- Saturday, January 24th set to mark trails with Mary Cerasa's Citizen's Club.

Tree Id Signs

- Due to weather, no signs will have been installed yet but this is planned for when weather improves.

Eagle Scout Project Update:

- He plans to have the Nature Center project completed by April.

Trifold brochure update

- Short discussion of what content to put in the brochure: mission statement, projects that have been completed, our open house, the Nature Center, the Clarence green space map, website information, photos, and Beeman Creek park. Potentially add a brief history of the Nature Center.
- The Town does not have printing capabilities so some options for printing businesses in Clarence were presented. Barb will get quotes to determine costs / next steps.

New Business

Signage for Nature Center:

- Steve presented on putting up a kiosk near the near the Senior Center parking lot that includes the map, rules, and other information for the Nature Center trails. Once we agree on the content, we could then pass it along to the Clarence Parks Department for construction. Paul suggested to look at the kiosk at the arboretum to see if a similar model would work.

Educational Presentations 2026:

- Mark Cara (rescheduled to February)
- Hawk Creek (April Open House)
- Other possibilities include Kathy Contrino, Mike Klepp
- Other suggestions are welcome for more educational presentations throughout the year; Cheryl suggested starting in spring to have monthly presentations.

Osman and Zeb Tree Planting:

- Instead of planting so many trees this year, perhaps some trees can be planted but there was discussion of asking Zeb and Osman if this year we might also use the volunteers to do maintenance of previously-planted trees.
- At the highway department most of the trees died because of the drought on the upper portion, but the lower portion some trees survived.
- This year we could do bare root tree planting: Plant a few larger bareroot trees on the nature center property. Materials needed would be: bareroot trees, 5ft welded wire fencing (\$ ~155 100 x 6ft), bag of mulch (~\$4) and some 2x4 (~5 per board) cut to size as stakes. Trees \$50-\$80 each.

Council Logo Stickers

- Some suggestions were made to keep the logo but put a different (or several different) slogans around the logo, to be printed on stickers to be given out.
- Barb to circulate potential slogans to the Council for voting, if a new slogan is agreed upon the Council will look at the budget to see if new stickers can be printed.

Projects for 2026

- Beeman Creek Trail Refurbishment: some trails need to be re-routed – for example, the scout trail that runs to the creek actually goes into the creek and

needs to be changed. Possibility to include a work day with the Clarence Citizenship Club, possibly the Environmental club to help.

- Cheryl distributed photos (from other towns) of small areas of land that could be “adopted” along trails that would be maintained with various vegetation, plants, etc. that could be installed on the side of the bike path, potentially at Goodrich intersection.

Next Meeting:

- February 12, 2026 at the Town Hall on Goodrich in the Kathy Hallock Room.

Motion to adjourn made at 8:00 PM