

REPRESENTATIVE POLICY BOARD

**LAND USE COMMITTEE**

FEBRUARY 8, 2023

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

Peter:

We're going to start our monthly meeting, February 8th, 5:30. This is being recorded. First of all is our safety moment and read it and put your heart into it, literally. Serious month of cancer, heart disease, et cetera. It's stay safe and stay healthy, and don't... Keep an eye on your loved ones and your neighbors. Okay. You know what, before we move any farther, I hope y'all don't mind, just give ourselves a moment of silence for Tony DiSalvo. You know, we all know he passed away. I couldn't get to the service, but if you don't mind, I appreciate a minute or so of silence in your own ways. Say prayer.

Thank you. Moving forward, approval of minutes for the January 11 meeting.

Brian:

This is Brian [inaudible 00:01:41], second.

Peter:

You got-

Peter:

Bob there, I believe. All in favor?

Committee:

Aye.

Peter:

Opposed? Abstentions? So moved. Okay. Nicole Smith, I see you're on. And we have our Deer Hunt update. It's all yours.

Nicole:

I'm going to share the PowerPoint with you guys. Just a little forbearance, I'm waiting for my new prescription for my glasses to come in and I can't see anything, so hopefully I got this memorized enough to give a good summary.

So I'm just going to do a quick summary of the Deer Hunt and how it went this year. So this is the 14th year of the Deer Hunt. I'm sorry I can't remember all of you from last year, but this is year 14 of the RWA Controlled Archery Hunt. Just a brief review of how it started. It started in 2009 on one property, which was Lake Gaillard in North Branford. Basically, in service to the forestry department, so that we could control the deer from eating the future forestry products. So they were desperate to control the deer population at this time, and over time, the hunt had expanded to four hunting areas starting in 2014.

So just a quick review of where those hunting areas are. Our largest property is North Branford at Lake Gaillard. Our smallest is Ansonia, Seymour. Bethany and Prospect are around the same size. Go. This is actually a really good photo, Josh. I had Josh Tracy, the invasive species coordinator, actually find some

photos of what the landscape will look like or does look like when deer aren't excluded from an area that you're focusing on trying to promote regeneration. So when the deer browse, especially the native species, they basically browse it to almost nothing. And so you have issues with erosion, you have poor diversity, all the bad effects that you have where the deer just eating all the stuff they shouldn't be eating. So that's why we do the hunt.

So this year we mailed out 330 applications. We had 181 participants. A few people dropped out because of injuries or sickness, so overall we had 179 people who participated. We had 10 days of scouting, which is pretty standard. This year, the scout was from October 1st and then it ended on October 10th. We had 29 days of actual hunting, from October 28th to November 30th. We had no hunting, so it was 29 days of hunting without the Sundays. Overall, we had 24 deer harvested, formed the four property, 20 bucks and four doe. We had the surveys went out right after the hunt, so I mailed them that week. The hunt ended and they were returned to me by January 31st. Standard for us, we had two check stations, one at Gaillard and one at Bethany where they've always been, and this year we are happy to report that there were no accidents or injuries on the property.

So really quickly, I got the hunting surveys back. So out of the 179 participants in the hunt, we had 160, returned the surveys back on time. A few came after the due date, so they were not included in this particular report to the Department of Public Health. But this data is pretty solid because it was just the majority of people who have returned the surveys. So we had a total of 323 days scouted from all the hunters. A total number of hunting hours of 1051. I'm sorry, a total number of hunting days, 1051. And we had a total of 5,784 or 5,785 hunting hours.

One major change to the hunt to acknowledge the accident that happened last year, we re-instituted all of the pre-safety measures that we take. That included the proficiency test that happened in July. We only had two people fail, and then we had the pre-hunt safety meeting and we did them... We did three meetings to make sure we were getting all the hunters to come. The other safety measure we added was the emergency descent device that we required hunters to purchase. Everyone purchased them, and most people seemed to like it. A lot of people didn't even know that these devices existed. So I was really happy to bring this to everyone's attention.

Okay, so like I told you, we only had 24 deer harvested, and this is the breakdown by site. North Branford had a total of 17 deer harvested, prospect had five, Bethany had two, and Seymour, Ansonia had none.

Peter:

Nicole, excuse me. Peter here.

Nicole:

Yes.

Peter:

Is this part of the survey? Is this how the survey works?

Nicole:

I'm sorry, say again?

Peter:

Is that part of the survey, back two slides ago, when they say they handed in their surveys? Or did they just report to you what they captured or killed or...?

Nicole:

No, the way that we record the capture and the harvesting of deer, is that we have check station sheets that are daily for the check station volunteers to fill out. So every time a hunter successfully kills a deer, they write down who killed it, where it got killed on the check station sheet. So that's how we know how many deer have been harvested. There's also a question on the survey that says, "Hey, did you shoot any deer?" But because there's so many questionnaires, it's easier to do it that way. So we have two ways of capturing the data. I just happen to use the check station sheet that do.

Peter:

Okay, thank you.

Nicole:

Sure. Okay. And I just wanted to give everyone a sense since this is the 14th year of the hunt, in terms of how the hunt has evolved and how the sort of deer harvesting has been going. As you can see, there's been sort of a steady decrease in the amount of deer that have been harvested since 2010. So 2022 was sort of the smallest harvest to date, but that could be for a number of factors. Last year when the Connecticut DP put out their own report of deer harvesting, deer harvesting had been down 18% across the entire state. It'll be interesting to see what that report shows in 2023. So I can add that to the data for next year.

Greg:

It looks like the herd is sending out. Is that correct?

Nicole:

I wouldn't know. I mean, that's an interesting research question. You'd have to kind of figure out how many deer there were originally, and then you'd need to figure out a scientific way to track that. But it's an interesting question to see if the deer population in Connecticut has thinned out and we don't know if it's thinned out due to hunting. That's the other piece of data you'd have to find, and that takes research to figure that out. All we know is that we've seen on the property, especially at Gaillard, which I'll go through in a minute, that the deer population, or at least the amount of deer that the hunters have harvested, has decreased steadily. That's the only thing we can say. I can't really look at this and say, "Hey, the deer population is decreasing." All we know is that our hunters have harvested less deer over time.

Greg:

Now, a couple years ago, there was an incentive for the hunters to kill does.

Nicole:

Yes, the doe incentive-

Greg:

I think it was-

Nicole:

... Is still in place-

Greg:

I think it was-

Nicole:

... But we've noticed that it definitely is in place, but we've noticed that the hunters are harvesting fewer does. What's interesting from reading the surveys is that the hunters are saying the deer are farther away, so they're having a harder time hitting them. This is not research data, but I have to tell you, if I'm driving around during the hunt, just sort of checking in at the check station volunteers or just being around, there is near a deer to be seen. I have to go to Lake Gaillard and go to other sites to do numerous things like empty manual rain gauges and stuff, and I see deer all over the place. So it's really funny. They seem to disappear during the hunt and then they reappear right after. So the deer definitely could be getting smarter. We have been putting pressure on them. So they've probably evolved strategies to evade more predators, including human predators too.

Greg:

They're adapting.

Nicole:

Yeah, I mean they're smart.

Peter:

They're very smart. Exactly. They know.

Nicole:

Yeah.

Jamie:

Nicole.

Nicole:

Yes, go ahead.

Jamie:

I was going to ask, does DEEP maintain number [inaudible 00:12:29], they sell licenser for deer permits, right? Or deer permits at DEEP, I don't recall this. Did they ask for the number of deer taken? I mean, don't they get tags or something? Is there any reporting coming out of DEEP that we could match?

Nicole:

They do a report every year, and I think our numbers get added to their overall report. So I submit a report to Rich Iozzo at DEEP every year as soon as the hunt is over and as soon as I get the surveys back, and I just did that last week. So as I was saying before, I read... The deer, the report that they put out doesn't come out until way later. I didn't get that report last year until maybe May or June, I feel like. So it'll be interesting to see what the report for the 2022 season says about the deer harvest overall on state land as well. But yeah, I mean, I don't know how a scientist will sort of match exactly like what's going on in our property. I think the only thing you could probably extrapolate from that report is sort of general trends as to how many deer are being harvested overall. I think that's probably the most conservative way you might be able to interpret the data without further research to figure out what the actual population is across the state.

John:

And I want to make one clarification, Nicole, you said you sent the report to DEEP. That's not true. You sent it to DPA.

Nicole:

I'm sorry. Sorry, DPA. Yes.

John:

Jamie's question was about reporting the deer harvests to DEEP. And just as you said, Jamie, each hunter gets a state license and they have four tags for archery. And once they take a deer on our property, there's two things that need to happen. One is they need to bring it to one of our check stations so that we know that they've harvested it on our property. And then they have to report that to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to officially use up one of their tags. We don't communicate that part to DEEP. The hunters have to communicate that themselves.

Nicole:

Yes. Okay.

Jamie:

Bit of an honor system or they have to remember to report it.

John:

That's correct. There used to be where hunters were required to bring in deer to state registered check stations, and we were one of them. They would only have to do it for a week period in the beginning of the archery hunt, or actually the beginning of the gun hunt, but included deer taken by archery. Then eventually everything went online and it is entirely an honor system at this point.

Brian:

This is Brian. One other question that I have is, now we've been doing this hunt for 14 years, do we see any evidence of less deer browse problems in the forest now that we've been doing it for 14 years?

Nicole:

I mean, I would have to... That's a question for Casey, the forester. I mean, this program is in service to the forestry program.

Brian:

Right.

Nicole:

And it would also have... You would to check in with the scientists who are monitoring the research plots to see what those look like after each subsequent hunt.

Peter:

John may be able to help us out there a little. John?

John:

Yes. So we did regeneration plots. We set up regeneration plots prior to 2009 when we started hunting. And then Alex and Josh re-measured them. However, there were problems about how they were finding the plots and how the differences in measurement. They weren't quite sure that what Valerie and Tim had set up in 2009, if they were doing the same measurements. So I can't say that we had conclusive reports about how much or how little the forest is regenerating, but we can't say anecdotally it's doing better. I mean, you could see that out there. There are fewer of what I call the "porcupine stumps." When you take down a tree, the tree will then send out shoots, new sprouts from the base, and then the deer browse it like crazy and it looks like a big porcupine. You don't see those as much anymore. And we definitely know that there's less deer out there.

And I've said this before in previous talks with you guys, that the big difference was the winter of 2011. In January of 2011, we had snow upon snow upon snow. There was four to five feet of snow out in the woods. Deer were getting hit by the droves and killed on Route 80 and other places all over the state, not just North Branford, and that really depressed the number of deer in the woods. Since then, as Nicole mentioned, we have continued to ask the hunters, "How many deer did you see out there? How many days did you hunt? How many hours per day did you hunt?" And we definitely saw a drop-off from their anecdotal observations of being out there. And they were out there for many days, many hours of how many deer they saw. And that has continued to this day. So while we can say that our hunting effort did not really depress the deer numbers, it has suppressed the deer number after the really hard and cold snowy winter of January of 2011. That answer your question? I'm not sure.

Peter:

Somewhat.

John:

I get off on tangents. I forget where I started.

Peter:

No, you did a good job. I believe it's getting... That the count was getting down, but I think Brian's question was, how much damage you're seeing to the greens, et cetera. Right, Brian?

Brian:

Yeah, well, but he answered the question and that they did have research plots to see how things changed over time, but they're not sure that the plots are being measured in the same way. So they really can't fully answer the research question.

John:

That's correct.

Peter:

Good. Everyone's happy. Thank you. Go ahead Nicole.

Nicole:

Okay, cool. Right so, just really quickly, I just wanted to, because I figured you guys would have a copy of the presentation. We don't have to go through this in excruciating detail. I just had graphed just to change by site for deer harvested and dough harvested. The only thing I can say about the data from looking at it since 2009, is that the largest sort of decrease in the amount of doe being harvested, is from Lake Gaillard. So we definitely... The hunters are seeing a lot of deer there, but they're not harvesting as many from Lake Gaillard, and that's the biggest drop off that we've seen. So that's pretty much the only thing I've noticed from the data. This is a chart explaining that. So you guys can take a look at that.

So I guess the final thoughts about the hunt, as we've talked about, we've reached the 14th year for collecting and analyzing data. These trends seem to be continuing. There are fewer deer sightings overall in our four areas of the deer observed. Fewer deer are in range of the hunters for ethical and humane shot, which is something you know that even though we want to decrease the number of deer, we want to make sure the hunters are killing deer humanely. We've seen an increase of invasive species, decreased annual harvest for the deer as we've talked about before. Casey is probably going to be looking at those research plots at some point, and I did send the annual DPH report to Department of Public Health about our deer hunt as well.

So overall the hunters seem very grateful for the opportunity. Some hunters basically express frustration with seeing less deer out there and not being able to take as many shots as they would've liked at their targets. But overall, it's pretty positive. Everyone likes to be out there. They love the hunt and they hope that the program continues and that's it. Do you guys have any other questions?

Greg:

Is it worth having the hunt in Ansonia?

Nicole:

I mean I couldn't say for sure. I mean, what do you mean, worth? That seems like that's a research question in terms of-

Peter:

Yeah.

Greg:

It seems like there's hardly any kills out there.

Nicole:

But it's a smaller site. There are only eight hunters that are allowed to be out there.

Greg:

Okay.

Nicole:

When the acreage was calculated, it's roughly like 20 acres per hunter and that's the smaller site. As you could... If you look back at the charts like Ansonia, Seymour has historically had the smallest number of deer harvested, but in terms of worth it, that would be a question for a researcher and the forester. They've never had a live deer harvest. It's pretty much the same since it's been around since 2014.

Peter:

Right?

John:

Yeah, and Greg, I can answer that question too. One of the reasons why we added... Well, two reasons mainly, we added the Seymour, Ansonia site. First was it was our first foray away from North Branford. So we always wanted to do this in other locations and we wanted to put our toe in the water first before we went to a site that was hundreds of acres. So this site was about 160 acres and the other reason why we chose it was that Valerie, at the time, and then after that it was Bill Van Doren, had a commercial firewood cutter in there. So that area got a pretty heavy cutting for firewood anyway, not a timber sale. And so we were hoping that we can get more trees growing in there. So that was one place we said, "Well, this would be a good place. If we're going to try another location, this is doable, this is reasonable, we can handle this. And it's going to do some benefit also if we can get some deer out of there."

In the end, like Nicole has stated, we have not harvested many out of there, but it's still worth it to keep putting hunters in there and trying.

Greg:

Okay. Now one last question. Did we always prohibit Sunday hunting?

John:

Yes, we have never allowed Sunday hunting. In the beginning of when we started our hunt, that was a state rule. I believe, and Nicole, correct me if I'm wrong, that the state, I believe liberalized it so people can hunt on Sunday on private land, which we would be considered. However, it's been our decision not to go that way because we still have researchers who go out there and try to use our land and especially

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we still have firewood cutters who go out there and use our land. So we want to keep the Sundays open for their usage.

Greg:

Okay, thank you.

Peter:

Thank you. Any other questions for Nicole? Thank you Nicole. Great survey. You guys have any questions, you can always reach out to Nicole, I'm sure.

Nicole:

Yep. I'm here for questions. I'm reachable by email or text or phone call.

Peter:

Okay, thank-

Jamie:

I have one. Nicole, when you were out there talking to the [inaudible 00:24:53]-

Nicole:

I'm going to actually stop sharing now so I can see everyone.

Peter:

Okay.

Brian:

Hi.

Peter:

Hi. Go ahead Jamie.

Jamie:

I'm sorry, I thought somebody else was talking. I didn't want to interrupt.

Peter:

Oh, Jamie, Jamie.

Jamie:

If anybody [inaudible 00:25:11] had asked about a bear hunt, which is not allowed in Connecticut yet, but I was just curious if that's come up among any of bear hunters if they're asked. Just curious.

Nicole:

No, nobody has asked to hunt bear at all. I can say that definitively.

John:

Yeah, and I can't say, I have not heard any requests to hunt bear. We've had, through the years, gotten requests to hunt other things, small game turkeys, even coyote, I remember someone asking, but what those things don't impact the forest. The main purpose of the deer hunt is to help forest regeneration. So I don't envision us liberalizing or adding other species to the types of wildlife that we would allow hunters to go after. Unless squirrels somehow become a detriment to our forest regeneration, then I might give you a different answer.

Nicole:

Plus all our hunting is done from a stand and a tray.

John:

That's right.

Nicole:

Correct. I mean hunters are allowed to move around after the hours of the hunt. They can move their tree stand, they just have to let me know they're doing it. And some hunters prefer not to use a tree stand, but they do use climbers, which are like tree stands. So if they are in a spot and they want to move somewhere else, they definitely are allowed to do that.

Greg:

Yeah, but the shooting takes place only from... The hunting part only takes care from the stand.

Nicole:

Correct.

Greg:

That's why Turkey hunting and the other hunting wouldn't come under what we do, I think.

Mark:

I'm sorry I'm late.

Peter:

Welcome Mark. We feel better now.

Mark:

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Peter:

All right. You got the whole survey anyways, right Mark? You read it through, right?

Mark:

Yeah.

Peter:

Yeah. It's a good job she did. It's interesting. And then we could talk about it again in the future. Any more questions for Nicole? Mark, how about you?

Mark:

No, I'm fine.

Peter:

Okay, Nicole. There you go.

Nicole:

Okay. Thank you guys. Have a really good meeting.

Peter:

All right. Thank you.

Peter:

Okay, everyone, we're going to be regarding the hybrid meetings. I know this month our RPB meeting is going to be hybrid.

So I don't know, it's says discussion. Does that mean our next meeting? Do we want to meet in person? Or we maybe with this mild weather, do we dare plan something outside? Probably not on John.

John:

No, not for March. Jennifer, correct me. I believe we are planning for hybrid in March because Vincent Kay, the beekeeper, is going to come back and he does not have a computer to join us in Zoom or Teams. So he could only do a hybrid meeting or a meeting in person in the field. Is that right, Jen?

Jennifer:

That's correct, yes.

Peter:

We're going to have it at the main office, correct?

Jennifer:

Yes.

John:

Right.

Peter:

Okay. I'm okay with that. And then after that we'll go from there. All right, John, any questions on that or interjection?

John:

No.

Peter:

No. Okay. John, I'm going to turn it over to you for the properties and the invasive species updates.

John:

Sure thing. All right. For the summary for January of 2023, at the end of the month we are at 90% full for all our surface water supplies. In 2022, we were at 87%. Long-term average is 77, so we're still way above average, so which is good. Getting ready for the next dry period. Excuse me. Rainfall for the month of January was just about, was a little bit more than average, about an inch more, and for the previous year it was about 2.6 that was below average. So again, a lot of precipitation but none of it solid. Almost all of it's been liquid. So it's going to be interesting to see what the stream flows will do once we get to the growing season, which may be sooner than later as we continue to have days in the forties and fifties.

For the fiscal year, we're at 28.75 inches of precipitation, last year at 33.81, and the long term average is 30.68. So we're still below for the fiscal year, but that's a function of the dry summer. For the land we need for the Water We Use program, at this point, I can let you know now that we have signed a purchase and sale agreement with an owner of 43 acres in Prospect off of Roaring Brook Road. This is adjacent to some property that we already own and the... Right now we are doing all... The title work is happening now. Evan and I will go out to inspect the property. We've already had it surveyed, so that's been done. We'll verify what the survey says and we hope to add that to our land holdings in the... I think the purchase and sale agreement says that we will have a closing prior to the end of April. So we hope to be done by then. This particular property is on the Mill River Watershed. This is the South Easterly part of Prospect that drains over Roaring Brook and into the Mill River eventually getting into Lake Whitney.

Other places that we've talked to property owners about potential acquisitions are, Branford, a property over of 12 acres, North Branford, 40 acres, and Madison, the property owner of about seven. At the Beach Street Pumps Lane property, we had Martha confirm at the assessor that the island parcel could be split administratively, but they didn't want to do it until after the grand list was finalized, which happened last week. I'm not followed up back on that, I need to talk to the [inaudible 00:31:52] guy to see what the status is of that. We spoke to the Madison land... I'm sorry. North Branford Land Conservation Trust and deep staff about language use in the draftee that was included in the Land Trust OSWLA Application.

Rental houses, Skiff Street. The appraiser completed the appraisal of the area that needs to be condemned by the town that was then sent to the town attorney. I've emailed him again to get a status

update and have not heard anything back. The last of the tires were removed and the driveway was blocked with a large tree. So if they're going to dump tires now they got to do it in the front yard where people can see them, they can't hide behind the house. For Ives Street, we corresponded with the owner about work at the property and an article was published in the register about work on the house that can be seen at the bottom and included in this monthly summary. And he is also the owner of the property at... That's a typo. It should be 1115 Great Hill Road. I noticed that there was an unapproved shed at the property and contacted him. I said that we will go out to inspect the property in February. So Evan and I will do that in another couple weeks as well.

Forestry updates, only two things in bold that are changes from last month. The East [inaudible 00:33:09] is up to 70% complete, and the North Chestnut Hill patch cuts is up to 35% complete. Both of those are in Killingworth. For other forestry notes, the wood cutter in Gilford, [inaudible 00:33:23] completed the road on his property, so we are reinstating his firewood permit. He had a dispute with a neighbor about how he was accessing our property, but he put in this road on his property to get to ours and we were satisfied with it, and he's going to be allowed to continue to get firewood from that direction. We replied to an inquiry about the timber sale off of Abner Lane in Killingworth and Jamie helped us out with that. Worked with the operations staff and PermaTreat to establish access to a second landing off in North Chester Hill Road. That's the same timber sale that's mentioned about the Abner Lane Road, Timber Sale.

Corresponded with the Seymour Town staff about water ponding on Haddad Road, near the former log landing by the slash wall harvest. We looked into a request to expand the PA490 forestland classification for two parcels in Gilford. Casey will be working on the qualified Foresters report for those so that we can get a lower pilot on those two parcels. And we work with a professional deer hunter to remove the deer that were seen inside the Nathan's Pond Slash Wall.

For recreation, I led a walk at Lake Bethany on the first of the year, New Year's Day hike. 20 participants who was very good and again was, as you can imagine, for almost all the days in December and January is unseasonably warm. We submitted the DPH annual reports to them for all the recreation areas, including the Deer Hunt one, which Nicole mentioned. The trails were cleared of down trees at Chamberlain and Bethany. We continued the process of hiring new staff for the 2020... That should be 2023, fishing season. Collected information for the next newsletter and that was sent to Tyler, so that should be coming out soon. Granted a request from the Land Trust North Brantford Land Trust to use wood ships at Gaillard for the trail coming from the Harrison Preserve. In response to an inquiry about metal detecting on our property, that is an absolute no.

In January at the end of the month we had 4,847 permit holders compared to... I'm sorry, 5605 for the previous year. Again, this is the slowly deflating of the COVID bubble and that compares, we just go, went down slightly from what we had at the end of December, that's typical for the December/January time period. Linda issued three special activity permits there, which is pretty typical for the winter time. That will start to ramp up in the spring as people, researchers and so forth get ready for their field seasons.

Other items, encroachments in agreement. We correspond with the tenant for the Matthew Street Field in Prospect and met with a prospective tenant for the North Street Christmas Street Plantation in North Branford. North Branford Forest Road, I sent many letters to abutters about encroachments, after we re-mark the boundary there. At the Shingle Hill Tanks, we corresponded with a consultant who's working for Yale to place a radio repeater on the tanks. We already have repeaters there for West

Haven Emergency Police and Fire. And there, Yale is looking to use that as a repeater to talk from New Haven out to the west campus. The former miles research area.

Hamden 364 Putnam Avenue, we signed the license agreement with the abutter to rebuild the retaining wall there. The retaining wall was just railroad ties, it was all wooden, was falling apart. So to best repair it and replace it, the access is best to come from our side of the property line and we said that was okay. They're going to clean it up while they work on it and then after they're done they're going to recede and stabilize everything on our property.

Cell phone towers. We authorize changes for the Verizon antennas at the orange site. T-Mobile expects to work on the shared generator at the Rabbit Rock Tank, which should start in early March.

New Haven Country Club in Hamden. We talked to the president of the country club about the license agreement for the parking area, which will expire at the end of the year. We just set up a time to meet with him and other staff board members of the country club to look over a proposal to keep that license agreement going. So we'll keep the revenue from that and the country club can keep parking the overflow into the overflow area that's on our property. If you've ever been to the Watershed Fund Golf Tournament there, it's the area that's all gravel way in the back and it's farthest from the clubhouse.

Trespassing. All our staff recorded various instances of trespassing including ATVs, hikers with dogs, hikers in un-permitted areas. People illegally parking and illegal fishing in the month of January.

Invasive plants. Josh treated and documented invasive plant populations in North Brantford, Bethany and Woodbridge. That totaled a mapping of 181 acres and treated over 12 acres.

The East Haven Beach Avenue Water main matter. The Eastman was executed by the town and recorded on their land records. So we have it now in our vault. That is all good. Now we just need to work on the permit for that and once we have the permit hand then we will start construction of the water main.

The deer hunt, well Nicole already just gave you all the updates there, she did a great job. Thank you. Nicole.

Seymour Great Hill Reservoir responded to consultants of the town about any plans we had of the former BUI dam that is on the far western side of town there. It's right up against the Oxford Town line. In fact, some of the BUI property was in Oxford and we noted that we did not have anything since it was conveyed before we bought the BUI system. I responded to a reporter from the register looking for information on coyotes and that was also published in the New Haven Register. I believe that is one of the articles that I copied for you in the bottom of this update.

And Sonia, Kimberly Lane who responded to a property owner at 303 Kimberly Lane, because he called again asking about marking of our boundaries, but we don't but him at all. This is a much longer involved story, but if you're familiar with Ansonia, Rhodes, Myrtle, I can't remember if it's Myrtle Road or Myrtle Avenue, is to the west of our Kimberly Lane Tanks. Kimberly Lane is over there farther to the east and then it used to go across. There was a paper road that went across and hooked up with Myrtle Avenue or Myrtle whatever it is. This guy owns property at the end of Myrtle Avenue. They're still called Kimberly Lane. So he keeps calling us and saying that we need to mark our boundaries, but we don't own anything there. The state does. I've talked to the state foresters in charge of that block. I've talked to him. I said, "It's between you and the state." And I gave him Jerry Milton's contact information. Hopefully he'd contacted him and he's gotten straightened out.

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Myself and my staff and we're working on remarketing boundaries. This is the best time of the year to do it, especially this year with no snow on the ground, you can really see everything. We've started additional property lines in Gilford, Woodbridge and Killing Road. We also met with operations staff to discuss removing trees from various water main rights of ways and easements to maintain these areas for the future. So that if and when we have a main break on these water mains that we don't have to go taking down large trees and the trees that are not in an impediment or a hazard to our water main. Our assets beneath them.

And then here we have seven different articles that I copied and pasted for you, including the two articles that I mentioned. One about the IFs house and the other about the coyote sightings. And with that, my update is concluded and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have.

Greg:

John, this is Greg, John.

John:

Go ahead.

Greg:

On the Shingle Hill to towers, if VO puts the antennas on, do we get some income from that?

John:

That's correct. What I told them is that we will be charging them for that in the instances of fire and police. Let me step back. For many, many years we've allowed fire and police emergency services to use some of our tanks and facilities. Not all tanks like there. We also have one at the Seymour Well Field. We have one at the West River Water Treatment Plant, Woodbridge uses an antenna out on the top of that building. And prior to 9/11, we charged everybody for them. It was about, I want to say it was between 1800 and \$2,000 per year per site that we charged. And then after 9/11, there was the big push for all emergency services, first responders to get on the same page and try to coordinate better together.

So at that time, the chief of police, our chief of police was Bob Piazza. And he, in consultation with fire chiefs and police chiefs said, "Well, we should be trying to work with them to get access to their frequencies so that we can communicate to them right away during emergencies. And in doing so, getting their frequencies, then we absolved them or credited them the amount that we were charging them." So all the fees for fire and police went away after 9/11 once we got the ability to put their frequencies on our radios. Since then, we've added a couple more. As long as we get the right to put their frequencies on our radios, we don't charge them. But in instances where we don't have that or there is no advantage to us, then we do charge them. Because this is Yale and it's not the Air Emergency services, we will charge them for putting an antenna on top of Shingle Hill if it gets to fruition.

Greg:

Okay, thank you. And one other question. On the bird walk on New Year's Day?

John:

Yep.

Greg:

Did you see any rare birds?

John:

The rarest bird we saw probably was a hermit thrush. I have not seen a hermit thrush in a couple years. Hermit thrush are closer related to Bluebird and robins, they're all in the thrush family. But the coolest birds we saw two bald eagles flying over. One was an adult and one was an immature bird. They were really nice to see.

Greg:

Oh, that's neat.

Peter:

Thanks John. I have a question on the tires. Did we ever find out who was doing the dumping?

John:

No, we were not able to determine who was doing the dumping. I probably mentioned this at the last one, if not... If I didn't I'll just repeat myself. There's definitely has been a serial tire dumper around the center of Hamden because there was a pile of tires basically dumped on the other side of the street behind the old IHOP that is now some kind of restaurant, I forget what type of restaurant it is now. They had a pile back there. We had probably two piles, two different instances that were dumped on our property behind the house. And then we learned of another one that happened at the KinderCare on Dixwell Avenue, which is only two blocks down from town hall and what three blocks down from the police department. So somebody has been roaming around the center of Hamden looking for quiet little nooks and crannies to go dumping tires.

I know that Larry had a meeting after all this was happening, Larry had a meeting with the Hamden mayor and that topic was raised with her. I don't know if the Hamden police have increased patrols or have been looking anymore, but it was brought to the Hamden's attention that this is a recurring problem in that part of town.

Peter:

Thanks John.

John:

Yep.

Peter:

Any more questions?

Mark:

John?

John:

Yeah.

Mark:

Have you gone by that house on Route 34?

John:

Which one? You mean the one we sold?

Mark:

Yeah, the one we sold. What is doing there?

John:

I've been by it. Yes.

Mark:

He's really gone high.

John:

It's going up again. Finally.

Mark:

Well he's going to have the best view of any house around. I mean he might have a lot of stipulations, but that's going to be a fantastic beautiful home- [inaudible 00:45:56].

John:

And the guy who bought it, his name is Wes. And what he said-

Mark:

What's his last name?

John:

His last name is [inaudible 00:46:05], his first name is Wes. And we've always talked about how it's hellacious in the front yard because you got people going by your front yard at 50 miles an hour or 60 miles an hour all day long. But the money shot is the backyard.

Mark:

Yeah.

John:

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When you look back and you get a nice view of our Wepawaug Reservoir and the woods back there, that's where you know you're going to sit. That's where you're going to sit with your coffee on the nice mornings and just enjoy your residency there.

Mark:

But its footprints correct? The footprint.

John:

Oh yes, yes. And he's shown us plans. He's got to rebuild and make it look just as it looked when we sold it to him.

Mark:

Wow. I mean the grounds. Oh, wow.

John:

In front and-

Mark:

That's going to be a million-dollar house. Million-dollar view house.

John:

In the back, yes. Not so much in the front.

Mark:

Well that's why you put that big fence.

John:

Yes.

Mark:

Anybody has a chance to go buy that property. Really should go buy it. Hey, the other thing is, how are we doing and who is in charge of recreation program for the inner city kids that we talked about that came up with PAL? Is that coming under your pretty or is it coming under somebody else? Are they hiring somebody?

Sunny:

Mark? The police chief as well as we are connecting with the New Haven Police Department. So they do have the PAL, Police Athletic League. So we've been communicating with them. So there is certainly positive traction on it. So hopefully it should be coming along this summer.

Mark:

That's not what I asked. I asked is there somebody going to be in charge of the program in addition to PAL for recreation for inner city kids? Or who's going to be in charge of doing that? You? Who's going to go and hire the people to coordinate it and all that?

Sunny:

Well, we-

Mark:

I know we've been in contact with these people, but I think that... And I think as a committee, when the budget hearing comes around, we should see if there is going to be some money put in this program to help inner city kids see, and I know the police department will do that too. And also to put some money in the program at the Whitney Center after we heard that fantastic presentation. And I think that we should all, as a committee, bring that up at the budget hearing and to try to assure that there's funds available for these programs, especially Whitney and this PAL program.

Sunny:

We will be doing it, Mark. I think we did put an additional recreation members into the budgets this time. So the question is to attract, I would say, and retain the folks who come in. So that is going to be a little bit of a challenge. In the past too, we have had the challenges but still I think we increase the hourly rates as well as the number of staff. So we'll see how it-

Mark:

So are you going to be in charge of coordinating that? Or is that John or is there a new person-

Sunny:

Yeah, it's going to be under this team. It's going to be myself, John, and Jeff, all of us will be involved. So I think it's going to be primarily. And then Paul will also be involved from the police. I would say end of it. That's correct.

Mark:

All right. So we're going to have some action this year to try to get as many kids as we can to see our wonderful woods and to help that Whitney water plan. She needs an assistant, I mean she needs manpower and a bigger budget for that program. So I hope that that's going to be in the budget this year. Otherwise-

Sunny:

Yes.

Mark:

... You're going to hear from me. I hope we hear from the rest of the committee about that. We really have to push for that. It's a very important program. We're the stewards of the land and we should really share that with the community as much as we can. Thank you.

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Sunny:

Thank you.

John:

Thank you. Any other questions? I don't know. It says when I'm looking at my screen, it says that Peter is leaving. I don't know if he's still here or not.

Mark:

Peter, are you still here?

John:

Peter Betkoski, are you still there? I think he's gone.

Jennifer:

Bob, do you want to take over or you want to give him a minute to come back?

Bob:

Yeah, let's continue on. I don't know if anyone else has any other comments regarding any other land items. If not, I guess we can say that our next regular meeting is going to be on the 8th of March and we're hoping to have it down at Sargent Drive, correct?

Jennifer:

Yes. It will be hybrid.

Bob:

So well, I guess if we get some samples of the honey, you can't get it if you're not there.

Mark:

Some samples of the honey.

Bob:

I don't know what he's going to offer Mark, so I'm not promising anything. But I'm, I'm looking forward to-

Bob:

Go ahead Jamie.

Jamie:

I was just going to say, I'm really looking forward to seeing what he is done, but I have a conflict at six o'clock, so I'm going to have to do it by hybrid because I have to be about a half an hour away at six o'clock. So I don't know if that... And I'm coming down from Hartford, so I don't know. So if you do a

hybrid, he does a lot of kind of movement with his hands and showing his... He brings show and tell. Will that be on-screen somehow?

Jennifer:

Yes, there'll be a video camera in the room.

Jamie:

All right, thank you.

Mark:

This the bee person, right?

Bob:

Yes.

John:

Correct.

Bob:

Yeah, I know. I'm very interested because over this past year there's some of his hives up near the property across the street from my house. And I guess I have to reiterate what Nicole's was saying. I've heard from several of the hunters that have been onto the prospect property and they all comment that as they're waiting at the gate, the deer are munching on my perennial stuff that's planted around my house.

Mark:

We have to make sacrifices, Bob.

Bob:

Does anyone else have anything else they want to discuss? Hearing none. And with the lack of Peter, I guess I'll accept the motion to adjourn.

Mark:

I move to adjourn.

Brian:

So moved.

Bob:

Okay. Any discussion? All those in favor, please say aye then.

Committee:

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Aye.