

Town of Niskayuna
TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES
3/7/2023
AGENDA

- 1) **Review of minutes-** (see attached)
- 2) **Highway Crews-** Crews will be working on trees and resident request list. Patching of roads, basin repairs and small drainage projects.
- 3) **Personnel-** (update) Highway and Parks – We currently have two grounds worker positions open. We will be posting on website and in the newspaper.
- 4) **Parks-** Crews have been working in the parks. The crews will be starting to trim brush as well as trail maintenance on the town owned trails. Also drainage at the baseball fields.(update)
- 5) **Yard waste--** trucks will begin circulating the town randomly April 3rd weather permitting.(please read flyer for rules for the pickup)
- 6) **Snow plowing/ sanding-** (update)
- 7) **Highway and parks purchases-**(items have been ordered)
- 8) **Quotes-** have been received for seed fertilizer and spreading at town facilities.
- 9) **Bid extensions-** Acceptance of the rollover bids for the mowing of Dean street park and the mowing of Baker ave park.
- 10) **Paving bids-** paving and services for paving to be used by the town of Niskayuna for the 2023 season.(bid opening on March 13th 10 am)
- 11) **Reso needed-** We will have a list of items in highway and parks for surplus.
- 12) **Seasonal help-** we will be putting a list together for seasonal help.
- 13) **Driver training-** program discussion.
- 14) **Open discussion –**
Spring projects-
Letter from Roy Thornton – wildlife and habitat in low mow areas, (attached).



Raymond Smith <rsmith@niskayuna.org>

[EXTERNAL] Wildlife Habitat at Blatnick Park

1 message

Roy Thornton <shivaree18@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 28, 2023 at 1:29 PM

To: Susan Polsinelli <spolsinelli@niskayuna.org>, John Della Ratta <JDellaRatta@niskayuna.org>, Ray Smith <rsmith@niskayuna.org>, Dart Strayer <dartstrayer@nycap.rr.com>, Laura Robertson <Lrobertson@niskayuna.org>, Ellen Daviero <edaviero@nycap.rr.com>, Ashok Ramasubramanian <ramasuba@union.edu>
Cc: Nick Klemczak <NickKlemczaksswcd@yahoo.com>

Dear People,

Please include this letter in the minutes to the CAC, Highway, and EDHPEC Committees.

Although spring is still a month or two away, It's time to think about possible enhancements of the wildlife habitat at Jeff Blatnick Park including:

- Further optimizing mowing for the benefit of ground-nesting birds and pollinators.
- Assessment and control of various invasive plants on and around the Park.

Last year, the Highway Department did leave large areas un-mowed (for which the birds, bees, and I am grateful). However, they did mow paths and disc golf access after the bobolinks had appeared and possibly drove some of them away.

Some smaller areas that have been left un-mowed for two or three years are becoming quite full of sumac, phragmites, and multiflora rose. One of the areas is that between the river and the rail fence along the downhill path to the railroad bed, and the other is the small field next to the Highway Department composting area.

Wildlife habitat could be enhanced by:

A. Mowing before May 15 the paths and other areas that are to be kept close-cut. This would avoid chasing away birds which have attempted to nest in those areas.

B. Mowing all the low-mow areas before May 15 and/or in the fall after the first heavy frost. This would avoid cutting early and late flowering plants. Except for control of invasives, mowing could be once a year in the fall.

C. Further minimizing the areas mowed for disc golf and walkers in order to maximise wildlife habitat.

D. Assessing the encroachment of invasive plants and planning how to control them. At the very least, spot-mowing the multiflora rose, phragmites, teasel, and sumac to slow the spread. Some examples of invasives at Blatnick Park are shown in the photos below.

E. Mowing all areas before May 15 or in the fall after the first heavy frost would help suppress invasive plants.

F. Further utilizing Nick Klemczak (Executive Director, Schenectady County Soil and Water Conservation District) and his knowledge and resources to address mowing schedules and control of invasives.

G. Further utilizing Nick Klemczak's expertise (and possibly a no-till seeder) to enhance wildflower plantings in the low-mow area next to the driving range and on the large landfill cap.

Other invasive plants in Blatnick Park include Asian bittersweet, buckthorn, and bush honeysuckle. The most worrisome to me are multiflora rose and bittersweet, although bittersweet is in the edges of woods and brush and not in the grassland habitat.

Photos of some of the invasive plants at Blatnick Park are attached:

1, 2, and 3 are of two particularly massive sets of bittersweet vines near the dog park. I laid my glove on one of the vines for scale.

4 is of Phragmites, a very tall and prolific reed grass.

4/21/2011

5 is of teasel; not as problematic as some of the other invasives, but present and increasing.

6 is of a patch of multiflora rose. There are many small patches of this on the landfill in the open and around structures on the landfill.

Concerning the Bluebird nesting boxes: I plan to maintain and monitor the eighteen boxes again this nesting season. Hopefully, Bob Yunick will be available again to band the Bluebirds and Tree Swallows that nest there. Because some of the boxes have been subject to invasion by the common house sparrow and by encroachment of brush and phragmites, several of the boxes will be moved into open areas farther from the woods—hopefully not interfering with maintenance by the Highway Department. (Ray, please let me know if there are problems.)

Thank you for considering these concerns and proposals.

Sincerely,

Roy Thornton
1337 Regent St.
518-393-8052



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6

**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
AGENDA
March 7, 2023; 8:00 AM**

- 1. REVIEW AND APPROVE 2/2/2023 PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**
- 2. ATTORNEY'S ITEMS**
 - a. T-Mobile contract renewal for placement of equipment on water tower. **(MY, AF)**
- 3. WATER & SEWER MAINTENANCE**
 - a. Open position in the maintenance crew
 - b. Purchase of pickup trucks **(Resolution)**
 - c. CCTV inspection truck replacement
- 4. UTILITY BILLING**
 - a. Spring 2023 Residential/Commercial Utility Billing Warrant **(Resolution)**
- 5. WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT**
 - a. Organic waste program update
 - b. Opening for Plant Trainee
 - c. Approve proposal for the repair of auger grinders **(Resolution)**
 - d. Purchase of materials for maintenance of UV disinfection system **(Resolution)**
 - e. Renewal of Organic Waste Support Services Agreement **(Tentative Resolution)**
- 6. WATER TREATMENT PLANT**
 - a. Plant upgrade project update
 - b. Countywide plant operator meeting held 3/1

NEXT MEETING: Date: April 6, 2023 Time: 8:00 AM