

PESTICIDE SAFETY ON ISLESBORO (PSI)
Meeting – Friday, March 27, 2020– 3:00 pm, by telephone

MINUTES

Present: Nancy Alexander, Lauren Bruce, Anna Congdon, Linda Gillies (chair), Marilyn Smith

Absent: Helen Elkins, Jennifer West

Linda Gillies called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

The minutes for the PSI meeting of February 21, 2020 were approved as written.

There was consensus that while the PSI committee should continue to plan for activities this coming summer, in view of the COVID-19 crisis, they may well have to be postponed.

Updates

Website

- Linda has told Peter Palermo at Elm Street Printing that the committee had decided to give the work for the expanded PSI website to Catherine Demchur-Merry of Islesboro. Linda and Catherine met to review an outline of the new website and procedures for putting the site together. Since then Catherine has registered the new site, <http://pesticidesafetyonislesboro.com/>, and has been working on the pages.
- Background photo/s. Catherine suggested that PSI might want to change the background photo for the present site's pages, which is not of Islesboro, perhaps to an aerial including the lighthouse. Linda contacted Bill Warren, who suggested that his son Greg could take an aerial using drone technology; Linda has been in touch with Greg, who would charge a modest fee. She also spoke with Marjorie Mills, who several years ago took an aerial from Stan Makara's plane for the Town's annual report. Marjorie mentioned that Tricia Ladd has taken beautiful photos of the island. Marilyn suggested that Steve Miller at IIT might be a resource.

Committee members felt that rather than an aerial, a familiar landscape scene might be more "personal" and effective. Perhaps there could be several different photos, including one of a pesticide-free lawn. Linda will look into possibilities.

- "Cookies." Nancy asked whether the site would have cookies and said that she did not think they would be appropriate. Linda said that she would bring the matter up with Catherine.

Public meetings

- Winter Information Meeting, February 27, 2020. Linda said that she had given a brief description of PSI's plans at the meeting and that people attending were interested in the issue.

- Summer Forum.
 - Venue. Linda has been in touch with Amanda Hobart to reserve the ICC for Sunday, August 2, a time when many summer residents are on island and making landscaping plans for the next year. The time allotted will be expanded to 5:15 – 6:45.
 - Speakers. Linda said that Janet Petzel has agreed to speak briefly about the impact of synthetic pesticides on human health. She has not yet spoken with John Kerr about addressing issues relating to pesticides and the environment. Anna Congdon would prefer to partner with someone else when talking about alternatives to pesticide use.

Water quality – general

- Linda reported on IIT’s event about water quality held at the Alice Pendleton Library on March 5, 2020. Mary Tomlinson, Maine DEP’s Pesticide Registrar and water quality expert and John Pietroski, Manager of Pesticide Programs spoke; about 20 people attended. Linda said that the speakers were neutral when it came to the advisability of synthetic pesticide use – their advice was to read and follow the label directions. Mary Tomlinson provided useful information about how to obtain well water (out of the tap) and where to have it tested.
- Linda will contact the Montana Analytical Laboratory suggested by Mary, Granite State Analytical suggested by Marilyn, Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory recommended by Lissa Robison of GEI, and TapScore at the University of California, Berkeley, which has an interesting website.

Landscaping care – best practices.

- Information. In advance of the meeting, Anna Congdon circulated a beginning draft of what she has gathered about alternatives to pesticide use. The committee congratulated her on a great start.
- Handbook. There was agreement that in addition to the website, preparing a “take-home” handbook based on Anna’s information would be effective. Suggestions for the booklet included: smaller than 8 ½ x 11, laminated cover pages to protect against moisture during outdoor use, funny little pictures, an inside cover pocket. Nancy said the booklet could “monetized” by being made available at the Town Office and/or other venues for a modest donation. It was thought that the booklet could be given for free to anyone who attended the August Forum (one copy per family).

Tarratine Golf Course

- Linda reported that Golf Committee chair John Bowlin as asked committee member John King to research and recommend pesticide use policy for the club. She spoke with John, who said that the committee has chosen the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, a rigorous education and certification program that helps golf courses to protect the environment. There are only five certified courses in Maine.

PSI budget. Linda said that the Select Board approved the PSI budget request of \$4,015.

Additional promotional activities. There was consensus that additional PSI activities, such as an article in the Islesboro Island News, should wait until the COVID-19 crisis is over.

Next meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, May 1 at 3 pm, probably by phone.

Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies

To Do

Anna Congdon

- Continue putting together information for landscapers about alternatives to pesticide use.

Linda Gillies

- Website: Ask Catherine about website “cookies;” investigate background photo options for the pages; continue to work on the website text.
- Investigate options for well water testing.

Approved 5/1/20

C: Janet Anderson, Chloe Joule, Catherine Demchur-Merry