

PESTICIDE SAFETY ON ISLESBORO (PSI)
Meeting – Friday, October 2, 2020– 4:00 pm, by telephone

NOTES

Present: Helen Elkins, Linda Gillies (chair)

Absent: Nancy Alexander, Lauren Bruce, Anna Congdon, Marilyn Smith, Jennifer West

As so few members were able to attend and there was no quorum, rather than formal minutes, this record of the meeting is in the form of “notes” that include Linda and Helen’s observations and suggestions as well as those made by committee members in recent conversations with Linda.

Linda Gillies called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm.

Feedback following July launch of PSI website and landscape care booklet. There is consensus among committee members that both the website and booklet have been generally well received by Islesboro residents. One indication is that according to Catherine Demchur-Merry, there were 492 visits to the site from the time that we “went public” in mid-July through September; 58 visitors downloaded the booklet.

Tarratine Golf Course. Under the leadership of John King, chair, the Tarratine Club Golf Course Resource Advisory Committee for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program has gotten off to an energetic start. The committee had its first meeting on July 15th; John’s article about the program appeared in IIN’s July/August issue. In August John, Tom Heyer, Sue Hatch, and Ginny King toured the course to make a “wish list,” the central focus being the removal of invasive plants and ideas for replacements. There is now a Google sheet for wildlife observations, as well as a slideshow and a Google map of the course. This fall John and Donnie Shand plan to develop a formal plan for water and chemical management on the course, as well as for plant and wildlife issues.

Next steps.

- After conversations with a number of people, including Jenn Hayden, who was helpful in putting together a strategy for PSI a year ago, Linda feels that the only “unfinished business” relates to determining whether the synthetic pesticides that have concerned us (glyphosate, 2-4D, bifenthrin) can be found in water in Islesboro’s household wells. Last winter PSI started to look into the issue and identified several labs that might be able to test for these chemicals. When Covid hit, the labs closed, and we stopped the research. Several committee members think that we should take it up again, finding out what the labs could do for us and what it will cost. Linda will make some inquiries and will report back. Jon Kerr, a member of the Groundwater Protection Committee, may be able to be of help.

- We should "keep the pesticide issue warm" through a variety of means including articles in IIN, special mailings of one kind or another, and using Garden Day to feature gardens that have been influenced by the PSI information (because of Covid, Garden Day will not be held next year).

Recommendations from committee members

- Helen Elkins. A new documentary - *Kiss the Ground: A Regenerative Secret*. 1 hour, 24 minutes. Activists, scientists, farmers, and politicians talk about the importance of soil micro-organisms and their potential for helping to solve world-wide environmental problems. Can be found on Google.
- Helen Elkins. A book, website, and podcast by Margaret Roach, a writer who after working at the NY Times and Newsday, became the first garden editor for *Martha Stewart Living*. In 1998, she wrote *A Way to Garden, a Hands-on Primer for Every Season*, and since then has developed a website - awaytogarden.com - as well as a weekly radio show on NPR. Podcasts from the show are available on the website.
- Marilyn Smith. A new book - *The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here* (2020), by Hope Jahren, a scientist who is a three-time Fulbright recipient and currently teaches at the University of Oslo. Paperback available on Amazon, \$12.95.

Next meeting. No meeting was scheduled.

Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gillies

To Do

Linda

- Investigate possibility of well water testing on Islesboro.

C: Janet Anderson, Jenn Hayden, Chloe Joule, John King

Approved 6/4/21