



## City of Shelton Trails Committee

Meeting Minutes for April 1, 2026  
Held at City Hall Room 104

**Present:** Bill Dyer, Mike Flament, Terry Gallagher, Mark Rowan, Ellen Cramp, Mark Vollaro

**Absent:** Bob Wood

**Also Present:** Teresa Gallagher (staff), Luis Isaza (volunteer)

The meeting was called to order by Bill Dyer at 5:02 PM.

**Meeting Minutes:** Ellen Cramp made a motion to approve the minutes from March 4, 2026. Seconded by Terry Gallagher. All were in favor.



**Recent Trails Activities:** With the snowpack gone, a work party was held to cut back invasive Japanese Barberry at Housatonic Woods, and a second work party was held to clear out the SIS Connector Trail in preparation for additional work this spring. Members also cleaned up litter, sticks, and branches off of the trails that had accumulated over the winter, and a few logs were cut. Additional trail and park signs were installed at Boehm Pond, Shelton Lakes, and Wiacek Meadows.

### Volunteer Hours:

- A work party was held to clear Barberry at Housatonic Woods along the Paugussett and Woodsend Trails (28 hrs including 7 hrs Paugussett South)
- A work party was held to clear out the SIS Connector Trail (40 hrs)

- Terry Gallagher worked on issues involving two brushcutter adjustments and repairs (7 hrs)
- Bill Dyer handled administrative tasks and inspections (3 hrs)
- Teresa Gallagher monitored, cleaned up winter problems, addressed drainage issues, and installed signage at Indian Well and Birchbank (8 hrs Paugussett North)
- Mike Flament cut a blowdown from the Paugussett at Hope Lake (1 hr Paugussett South).
- Luis Isaza monitored French's Hill (1 hr)
- Mark Vollaro cleared blowdowns at Pine Lake (18 hrs)
- Terry Gallagher chamfered 8 posts for park/trail signs (1 hr)
- Ellen Cramp monitored and cleaned up Oak Valley Trail (2 hrs)
- Mark Rowen joined Teresa Gallagher at Home Depot to purchase and transport 4x4 posts at Home Depot (1 hr)
- *Conservation staff created and installed new signage for Boehm Pond, Shelton Lakes, Wiacek Meadows, and the Paugussett Trail; cleaned up litter from several trailheads; and winter cleared logs and sticks.*
- **Total Volunteer Hours: 110 hrs (including 8 hrs Paugussett North and 8 hrs Paugussett South)**



New park and trail sign along Constitution Blvd North

#### Goals for 2026:

1. **Refurbish three kiosks:** No update. Three kiosk header signs are ready to be installed.
2. **Construct bog walk leading to Stockmal Bridge:** No update.

3. **Improve the SIS Connector Trail:** A work party was held to clear out many logs, branches and sticks along the edge of the trail and shift two sections of trail that required side-hilling. The BOA Street Committee and Police Department Traffic Division are looking into a crosswalk at Constitution Blvd. The crossing point would need to be moved back from the intersection for safety. However, there is a ledge knob along the roadside that precludes a minor shifting of the trail crossing. Teresa Gallagher took a look at the area and found a via alternative route about 150 feet north of the current crossing. She will contact the Shelton PD to find out where the crossing should be. Teresa Gallagher also expressed concern for the Rec Path driveway crossings off of Oak Valley Road. The homeowners would be aware of the Rec Path, but their delivery services would not, and trail users might speed across the driveway without looking. Members agreed more signage is necessary.
4. **Obtain rewards for dedicated trail volunteers:** Terry Gallagher said he was waiting for a mockup of hats from Blanchette's. They said they had it but it was misplaced.
5. **Contract resurfacing of the Rec Path from Lane Street to the upper Wesley crossing.** Bill Dyer said they need to look at some drainage issues first.
6. **Construct a bridge on the Paugussett Trail at Birchbank over Upper White Hills Brook.** Teresa Gallagher reported that she is scheduled to meet Alex Bradley from CFPA to look at the site. Mark Vollaro said he was opposed to having CFPA involved and strongly recommended installing metal scaffolding instead.

**Letter to CT DEEP regarding the Stockmal Trail connection to Trombetta Woods across Means Brook/Centennial State Watershed Forest:** A letter from the Trails Committee to the Commissioner of the CT DEEP, with a cover letter from Mayor Lauretti in support of the project, were sent.

#### **Upcoming Work Parties:**

Saturday, April 11, 9:00 am: Meet at the SIS parking lot to either repair fence posts at Silent Waters or work on the SIS Connector

Saturday, March 25, 9:00 am: This will be a continuation of the April 11 work party, same meeting location.

#### **Equipment and Expense:**

Mark Vollaro submitted expenses totaling \$61.12 for hardware, a Christmas wreath, survey tape, and fuel.

**Grub Axes:** Two grub axes are now bent but are covered under warrantee. Mark Vollaro will take them back to Home Depot for replacement.

**Stihl FS460 Brushcutter:** Terry Gallagher reported that the pull chord mechanism broke and the brushcutter was brought to Knights in Orange for repair. Two bolts that secured the pull chord housing had also snapped off. After two weeks, Knights reported that while drilling out the snapped bolts, the drill slipped and damaged the engine housing. The estimated repair cost would be

\$550. This is the most powerful brush cutter the Trails Committee has and Teresa Gallagher was planning on using it to cut invasive Autumn Olive growing in the hayfield at the Klapik Open Space.

Committee members discussed whether to repair the old brushcutter, purchase a new gas-powered FS-461 model similar to the old one, or purchase a battery powered brush cutter instead. The battery powered one would be effective for many things but not as powerful as the FS460.

**Terry Gallagher made a motion to purchase a new FS-461 Stihl Brushcutter for approximately \$1200 with an additional \$300 for accessory parts (blade assemblies, blade guards). Seconded by Mark Vollaro. All were in favor.**

**Scout Projects:** Troop 28 Matthew Randall's project at French's Hill was approved by the Council and fundraising is underway. The project involves additional bogwalks. Troop 28's Ben Wirth is considering a kiosk for the Rec Path at the Dog Park.

**Comments by Members:** Teresa Gallagher alerted members to the rising threat of Alpha Gal Syndrome, which is an allergy to red meat and dairy products triggered from the bite of the Lone Star Tick. The ticks behave differently than the ones we are used to because they hunt their prey rather than "quest" for them, and can travel very fast. A bite can induce this allergy almost immediately. Lone Star Ticks have become common on Long Island and have been reported in Connecticut.

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm**

*Minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered a draft until approved by the Trails Committee.*