

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex

Meeting Minutes - Final
Tuesday, July 17, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Tom Gilmore Chair, Jeffrey Abbe, Norm LaPierre, Lyman Cousens and Edward Cherian, Ex-Officio

Also present: Alan Hardy, Planning & Community Development Director

Guest: Charlie Niebling, Town Forester

Regular Business

- Open by Chair 7:00 pm
- Roll call taken
- Review and Acceptance of the Minutes of prior meeting minutes: May and June Minutes needed approval. A motion to approve the May Minutes was made by LaPierre, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote. Gilmore was not at the June meeting. A motion to approve the June Minutes was made by LaPierre, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.
- Accountant's Report: No action was taken.

Old Business:

- Town Forest Update:

Niebling noted that Herrick said he would be here at 7 pm., but has not arrived yet. Niebling would like to come to their August meeting to submit a proposal on a sale and cut at Dagody Hill. He'd like to put that out to bid in the month of September and do the work in October to try to avoid the challenges of fall rains. It's less of an issue working on frozen ground. Trying to get in there on bare ground, minus snow, is less of an issue. Cousens asked if he could get the proposal to the Commission prior to their meeting. Niebling said he would. Cherian asked if he was planning to bid it differently. Niebling said the chip market has taken a turn for the worse. He would recommend that the Commission would be open to conventional timber harvesting and put as much wood out as possible and keep as much of the tops on the ground. It will limit the spectrum of operators who would be interested in doing the work. There are still a number of operators out there that would be interested. Gilmore asked if they would be interested in cable logging. Niebling said yes. Cherian felt they may get a better bid with a feller buncher operation. What is the oak market like? Niebling said the oak market is very strong. There is some venire oak on the property. Abbe asked if they would be doing small cuts. Niebling said small patch cuts, 1-2 acres in size. There will be a buffer left along the trail around 100 feet on each side. A little selection cutting. He'd like to put one or two larger cuts along the west side of the trail looking towards the Barnard lot where it's ledge. It would open it up to the view.

- Small Fish and Games grant.

Cousens and Abbe were involved in obtaining the grant. Cousens noted that the Commission Chair needs to sign a form stated that they would like the money. Gilmore asked if it was being used for the seeding, etc. of the Town Forest. Cousens said yes. Gilmore signed the form. Cousens said they should put an article in the News Vine offering to walk people through the grant process if they are interested.

Gilmore noted that he and Abbe have had a discussion with the Water Precinct. They took their offer of \$20,000 and countered for \$40,000. Gilmore thinks they should accept the \$40,000 counter offer. He believes that it is a nice piece of property for the town to own. He hasn't presented this to the Selectmen yet but will next week. Cherian noted that they don't need permission from the Selectmen. Gilmore said they have roughly about

\$170,000 +/- in their capital fund. Take \$40,000 out for this and they will have the Town Attorney do the work on the contract. Hardy noted that the town attorney will do the closing. Abbe asked if they should offer \$35,000 with deferred maintenance. Hardy asked if they feel they have wiggle room in the \$40,000. Abbe said he's not sure. Gilmore feels they should accept the \$40,000 and go with it. Abbe is not opposed to doing that. Cherian asked if there was a title search and survey on that property. Hardy said he hadn't considered the title piece, but the survey they may want to do. The new abutter said it was a rather aggressive approach when the precinct established the north boundary. It may be good to bring in a surveyor. Hardy would like to see the parcel in the Commission's hands as soon as possible. Gilmore feels the same way. It would be a fine asset for the town. Cherian said it may be up to \$5,000 in costs. A **motion** to authorize the Chair to negotiate the sale of purchasing said property for the sum of up to \$40,000, subject to survey and negotiation of additional professional costs and whatever else is deemed necessary, was made by Cousens, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.

Gilmore has spoken with Mr. Morrill who owns the large 122 acre property on the corner of Water Street and Long Street. He has stated that he would like a conservation easement on it. Gilmore has been in contact with him. He has also contacted the Forest Society. He's dealing with Mr. Hotz. The presumption would be that Mr. Hotz will fill out the application for a grant which he understands would cover 50% of the easement value. They have already contracted and paid for an assessment value, which he doesn't want to pass out or is public information, but the assessment came in that the easement cost is \$315,000. He has talked with Mr. Morrill and if the Commission received half of that from a grant it would leave \$150,000 or so for the Commission to match and Mr. Morrill was willing to make a contribution. They should have about \$100,000 to use towards that. Cherian asked if the Forest Society make the application for the grant. Gilmore is not sure. The numbers and details are still to be negotiated. That will pretty well deplete their capital funds. The deed restrictions would allow farm buildings and buildings to house the farm workers. LaPierre was in favor of this parcel being put into conservation. Niebling said Morrill told him that he has owned that property since 1989. It may be of interest to have the Forest Society hold an Executory Interest. It's standard practice. Gilmore said that he has a copy of the appraisal if any of the commission would like to see it. It is not public information at this time. Hardy said they would be meeting with the Selectmen tomorrow and asked if they would like to let the Selectmen know it is coming up. Cherian said he would be bringing that up. Gilmore said he is not able to make the meeting tomorrow, which was why he was going to meet with them next week.

Gilmore had been approached by Mr. Keegan, who is the Chair for the Agricultural Commission and he suggested a committee which would consist of one person from AGCom and one from Conservation Commission to evaluate people to have an award for a major contribution for the town of Boscawen which will be awarded at the Old Home Day event. He's asking Mr. Cousens to be part of that. Mr. Cousens said he would take care of that. Gilmore said that that would be an official dedication of Mr. Cousens to participate in that committee. Cherian said that there would be a dedication of the Town Gardens at the Old Home Day event. Hardy noted they are looking for a bolder to be etched. They want one with a nice face to it so that they can etch "Ken Marshall Community Garden" into it.

Charlie Niebling said Dave Herrick had arrived. Herrick apologized for not be able to make the last meeting. Gilmore discussed having him doing the harrowing and the seeding. Herrick said they will harrow, Lime it and do the dragging. The only part he is not going to do is the de-rocking of it. After it's smoothed out they will lay the seed that the Commission has provided. Gilmore asked if they had resolved the issues with the wells that were disturbed. Niebling said they were waiting for Dean of DPW to contract to have the monitoring wells (3 of them) that were there to allow evaluation of the underground water. The one they have to replace is the steel pipe monitoring well because DES has said they have to. The worst case scenario estimate is that they can be less than \$4,200. Once they know what the numbers are they can move forward. They owe Herrick \$2700 from the net proceeds of last winter's sales and \$2600 they agreed to for harrowing, lime and seed but not de-rocking. Those are the last of the financial matters on the table. They need the number from Dean of DPW and then they can go forward. Niebling wants the field work done and all the close out work done from the Timber harvest. One of the channel bars Chandler Herrick put in has blown out and needs to be replaced. Hardy will get a number from

Dean tomorrow. Herrick said de-rocking is all in how smooth you want it. The guy who will be mowing and brush hogging's mower will take an awful hit if it's not done right. Gilmore suggests after they complete the harrowing they look at how it is. If you can get the seed and Lime down and then they can pick the rocks off that are necessary for the mower. Gilmore said if the brush hogging will go over the rocks stay. Niebling said John Fife has been up there once and had no problem with the existing field. He feels they should have John Fife come along to tell them what they need to do to make it safe. Herrick said getting some Lime on there will help. Herrick said his seeder is a small seeder. Niebling said these next steps will fall into place in the next couple weeks. Herrick said they will have to blend the seed into the Lime. Cousens asked if the grass will grow with this weather. Herrick said typically the best time to seed in the fall is the end of August first of September. Discussion regarding bittersweet. Gilmore said they need to facility Mr. Fife in there to mow it. They need to get what rocks that are in his way out. Gilmore said they just need to go pick the big rocks off. Niebling said Herrick will finish up the harrowing. Herrick said yes and then have a meeting with Niebling and discuss the rock situation. If they want to put the rye into the Lime they can certainly do that. It's blended at the plan where it comes from. If they leave a fair amount of rocks on it, they apply everything through the Lime spreader and it falls where it may and then they drag it. Gilmore feels they need to broadcast the seed and then drag it. Gilmore will expect that before their August meeting this will be all taken care of.

- Cherian said that according to the Old home day brochure the dedication of the Community Garden to Ken Marshall will be 8.23.18 at 5 pm.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm was made by Cousens, seconded by LaPierre and passed by a unanimous vote.

Next Meeting: August 21, 2018 at 7pm

Respectfully Submitted
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary