

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
April 20, 2021
Minutes

Present: Thomas Gilmore, Chair, Jeffrey Abbe, Lyman Cousens, Mark Kaplan, Norm LaPierre, Henry Carrier, and Matt Burdick.

Absent: none.

Staff Present: Kellee Jo Easler, Planning & Community Development Director, Kearsten O'Brien, Planning & Community Development Assistant and Rose Fife, Recording Secretary.

Due to the Covid-19/Corona Virus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency 17 Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board was authorized to meet electronically.

Regular Business:

- Open by Chair at 7:00 pm
- Roll call by Chair.
- Accountant's Report – Conservation Commission Fund \$239,873.24. Forest Fund \$26,925.37. Conservation Commission Town Budget line items, they've spent none.
- Review Minutes 03.16.21 – Motion to approve the Minutes as presented was made by Cousens and seconded by Kaplan. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Gilmore, Abbe, Cousens, Kaplan, LaPierre and Carrier.
- Designate Member for Action Items – Gilmore was willing to do this but would instead like to ask Cousens to take this task on. Cousens accepted.

Old Business:

• Discussion Items Town Forest – Abbe presented. He is continuing to work with Avitar regarding trail maps for the new forest. Niebling has the new kiosk up. Lexan has been cut and is ready for the kiosk. He will pick it up tomorrow. The old Town Forest continues to get a lot of use. They have put a QR code on the Boscawen side and would ask for a second one for the Concord side. They continue to want to have some of the trails opened up a little more before they open it to the public. They do not have a map or trail signage yet. Niebling cautioned Abbe to have it in place before they open it to the public. They still do not have any names for the trails. He believes he can come up with a number system that would work until they have named the trails.

Trail work volunteers and the paperwork required by Primex is difficult for people to understand as it is very in depth. There are a lot of students at MVHS that need community service credits and if they are not 18 they cannot volunteer. He is not sure how to proceed with volunteers. He's not sure he's the right person to handle this. They need to put together a trail committee. He has a list of people willing to volunteer to do the work. He's having difficulty gathering them together. Gilmore felt it is important not to over burden the volunteers. Burdick asked if parents could sign off on students volunteering to do the work. Easler reported that they have discussed this with Primex. She also reported that the Select Board thought the volunteers should be 18 and older. Easler thought someone could speak with the Select Board about this. They are going by what the insurance company is requiring. Gilmore would talk with the Select Board at a later date. O'Brien asked if Gilmore would like a copy of what the Select Board approved in January. Gilmore said yes. Easler asked her to send both what Primex and what the Select Board approved as well as the volunteer sheet that needs to be completed.

Kaplan asked if they knew of a program called Nature Groupies that he learned about from UNH Extension. They could get a group of volunteers from that organization one weekend, depending on the need. He'd be happy to reach out to the extension. Abbe thought that was a great idea. He thinks that due to the pandemic they should have small pods of 2 or 3 people working together. The key is to get the young kids involved. Easler asked how many under 18 have shown an interest in working in the forest. Abbe thought they would have a lot more. Easler asked if Abbe would like her to speak with the Select Board. Gilmore asked what the requirements for what volunteers could do were. Abbe suggested they look at the Nature Groupie website. They could get Boscawen on their agenda. Gilmore wants to know what their criteria is for accepting volunteers so they can use that as a pattern with discussions with the Select Board. Abbe explained that the Nature Groupies encourage people to use their pattern. Cousens added that the Boy Scouts are having a celebration this Saturday the 24th. It's rather late to participate in that, but here is an opportunity for volunteers. Due to the restrictions of Primex they are missing out on this opportunity.

- Morrill Easement Public Hearing for Discussion – Gilmore received an email from Brian Hotts who is waiting for some paperwork from NRCS. June or July at the latest will be the closing. They won't have to have a public hearing for the funds until June. He will try to get the finances together before that. Cousens asked how short on money were they. Gilmore said less than \$8,000. He believes it is all funded. But worst case they may ask Mr. Morrill.

New Business: • BVTF Kiosk Invoice Paid 04.06.21. There was another small bill for \$6 or \$7 that came in today.

Resignation: They received a letter of resignation letter from Brandon Jackson. They are sorry to see him step down.

Gilmore asked Easler to report on Walker Pond. Easler reported that the Purchase and Sales was sent to Legal. It then went to the Penacook/Boscawen Water precinct. They need to have a public hearing before they can sign the agreement or disperse funds. This will be discussed this Thursday with the Board of Selectmen. She asked if Monday May 3rd will work for the Commission. Easler and Hardy will be the presenters for two pieces of Walker Pond property. RSA 36A:5 is the RSA that manages the public hearings when it comes to the Conservation Commission. Gilmore and Cousens can go to the meeting. LaPierre is not sure if he can make that meeting. Kaplan will volunteer. Easler wants to make the meeting for 6:30 pm. Everyone agreed 6:30 pm on May 3rd. Easler explained how the meeting will run. They will discuss and take a vote to approve or not approve the Purchase and Sales. Abbe will be out of state on May 3rd. Carrier will be there.

Walker Pond will put a heavy burden on the Commission to manage the property. Gilmore would like Kaplan be the go to person for the new properties on Walker Pond. Kaplan would be happy to do that. He'd like a discussion regarding what is involved. Easler thanked him for taking this project on.

Cousens reported that he attended a couple of workshops. One was done by UNH and one was done by Saving Special Places. The workshop done by UNH was regarding invasive plants and not very interesting. The Executive Directors of NE Wilderness Trust and the NE Forestry Foundations presented information that a portion of conservation land should be dedicated to wilderness and not touched by either trails or cuttings. He thought that presentation was interesting.

Abbe wanted to add that the wilderness idea is that it is difficult to have a wilderness in the area that they have. Thanks to Forester Niebling, they have set aside pieces that will never be cut.

Matt Burdick, Selectmen introduced himself. He is an outdoors man who likes to hunt and fish. He's walked the town forest. He's happy to be a part of this group.

Carrier asked where the May 3rd meeting will be held. Easler explained that it will be a virtual GoToMeeting. There will be no in person meetings for a little while longer. Gilmore was hoping that the Conservation Committee meeting would be held outdoors. Possibly by June in the Boscawen Village Town Forest. Easler thought they could achieve the 6 foot spacing meeting outdoors, so they could do that. She can discuss it with Alan Hardy.

Non-Public: • RSA 91:A II (d) – none.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 pm was made by Cousens and seconded by Abbe. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Gilmore, Abbe, Cousens, Kaplan, LaPierre, Carrier and Burdick.

Next Meeting:

- May 18, 2021

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*