

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex
February 15, 2022
Minutes

Present: Thomas Gilmore, Chair; Alan Hardy, Henry Carrier; Jeff Abbe, Norman LaPierre, Aurel Mihai, Matthew Burdick, Lyman Cousens, and Mark Kaplan

Absent: none

Staff Present: Rose Fife, Recording Secretary, Kearsten O'Brien, Deputy Planning and Community Development Director, Kellee Jo Easler, Planning and Community Development Director, Kara Gallagher, Planning & Community Development Clerk

Regular Business:

- Open by Chair @ 7:00 pm
- Roll Call by Chair
- Accountant's Report – Forest Fund: \$21,316.03, Conservation Fund: \$87,929.83. Town Line Item Budget: \$1,950
- Review Minutes of 1.18.22 – A **motion** to approve the Minutes as submitted was made by LaPierre, seconded by Cousens and passed by a unanimous.

Old Business:

- Re-appointment for Lyman Cousens -March 2025 – O'Brien explained that once the commission does a motion for appointment it then needs to go before the Select Board for approval. Cousens explained that instead of being a regular member, he would like to be an alternate. He's been on the committee for quite some time and would like to give an alternate a chance to be a full member. Gilmore will move Carrier up to a full time member. Carrier agreed to that appointment. A **motion** to appoint Cousens as an alternate member and appoint Carrier to a full member was made by Gilmore, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.
- Town Forest Discussion Items – Abbe reported: They are waiting for Avitar to complete the map. They are very close to having a completed trail map. No trees down to report on. He has brought signs and they have mounted them onto plywood. He has 16 to put out in various areas of the trail. They need to speak to a few property owners before they enter onto their land. They want to keep people on the marked trails. Trails will be color coded with the map. There will be a QR code on the kiosk. O'Brien asked if they were naming the trails or using a numbering system on the trails. She spoke with Fire Chief Kenney regarding using historical names for the trails. Abbe reported that 'Knowlton Loop Trail' and 'Marsh Loop Trail' were a couple of names they decided on. Annalee Dolls owned nearby cottages and they thought they could use that name; 'Annalee Loop'. O'Brien will speak with Chief Kenney to get more historical names.
- Walker Pond Discussion Items – Kaplan reported. He reached out to the person in Londonderry to see how they managed their pond. He has a name to call who works with Fish and Game that he will call to get some information on the parking situation. He would like some input from them regarding parking. O'Brien reported that an abutter to the Walker Pond, Mr. Fisher, has some concerns about parking there. There was some discussion regarding moving the dry hydrant. Easler explained that the hydrant has no turn off valve. Hardy explained where the pipes come through. They would need to get it out of the way. Once the cold weather is gone they can review it better. Paul Fisher's concern

is something they should be concerned about as well. You don't want to get stuck out there. Easler noted that other town lakes have areas where they can park their trailer elsewhere. Abbe reported that there are 5 parking spots at the boat launch currently. Kaplan wanted to discuss the pump house so that whatever they do, he can state clearly to people why they chose the path that they will. Gilmore asked if DPW is also reviewing that. Hardy explained that the pump house building is in disrepair. Kaplan wasn't sure if the people of the town might look at the building as useable, so he wants to be more transparent on use of it. Hardy explained that there is no gate valves in the main's system. Kaplan remarked that the pump house is in the way of fixing the problem. Hardy noted that the indirect issue is the practice tower. The Fire Department doesn't have a use for that and space is being lost to that tower. Abbe asked if there was discussion to eliminate that tower. Hardy thought they should be able to get an answer from the Fire Chief quickly. Easler reported that the current fire chief doesn't use it. Kaplan thought it as a nice viewing space, if it were safe to use. Hardy wanted to be clear that the tower is not a building, but it is a structure. Whether it is safe or not, he's not sure, but it doesn't sound like it is. From a building standpoint it shouldn't be there. Kaplan hasn't reached out to the Merrimack County Conservation yet, but perhaps they may have funding available to them for things they want to do around the pond. Kaplan wanted to talk to the people in Webster who are fronting on Walker Pond. Mihai and Niebling will be walking the land when there is less snow. O'Brien does have the survey questions, but needs to compiling them more. Are they looking for more activities they can do out there or are they looking for more ideas that they may have, or may want to see out there. Kaplan said both. He'd like to know how people are using it now and what other ideas they may have for uses. Abbe wanted to be sure they talk with Mr. Egounis as the access to the lot along the pond crosses his property. Kaplan wanted to mention that they have the Egounis', Larochelles, Talberts and Fishers that abut the land. They should discuss how to approach those folks and what they should be saying to them. Easler and Hardy noted that David Sanborn is also on the corner. He's at the property a lot in the summer. Paul Fisher was in the audience. Kaplan asked if he had anything else he'd like to add to their parking conversation. Mr. Fisher reported that he was here 2 weeks ago and discussed the use of the road and continued maintenance of the right of way and concerns he had about parking. He's lived there 21 years. The road is over used and under maintained. The condition of the road behind the pump house is deteriorated. Parking issues have prevented them from getting to their home a couple of times this year. Kaplan wanted to be sure they heard his perspective. He snowmobiles, canoes, fishes and ice fishes so he is out there often. Mr. Fisher wanted to clarify that parking on the roadway isn't allowed. Hardy wanted to ask the Fire Chief this morning if the status of the road affects his ability to deal with the parking problem. Signage would give people notice then the Fire Chief can act. Mr. Fisher's primary issue is the parking and he is delighted that the town has this incredible asset. Abbe sometimes goes there with a small trailer and he thought that they should have car top boating only and eliminate trailers. Hardy thought they could reduce the impact. He asked if the winter parking in the boat launch is new. Mr. Fisher said it's the same, but there is more of it.

Matt Burdick reported. Expanding the area by knocking down some of the trees, etc. would allow for trailers. It would be more accessible and get people out of the road. Hardy explained that there isn't a whole lot of dry land there and they would need to study what they can do there to improve the road without negatively impacting the wetland. The parking area is the dry land. They should investigate. Easler asked piece of property the town owns that is across the road. Hardy explained. Mr. Fisher explained there is a road next to his barn and the town owns a part of it. The town has easement over the first 1/3 of the road and then they own a section. Easler asked if it was steep. Fisher answered yes.

Easler didn't know if that could be excess parking.

Easler asked about the Warrant Article at the town meeting. Can they vote on the Select Board acquiring property outside of town? Hardy explained that the body can authorize individuals to speak on their behalf. Gilmore explained that the purchase of the dam is by the town, not the Conservation Commission. Maintenance is as well. The Selectmen will have that responsibility. Easler reported that quite a while back she reached out to the Town Administrator in Webster and asked if they could speak, as part of it is in Webster. No one has called her back. She believes it is important that Webster and Boscawen be on the same page as far as the dam is concerned. Abbe explained that access to the dam is limited. Kaplan asked who would respond to questions regarding the dam. Easler answered Dean Hollins and Matt Burdick. DWP put \$3,200 into their budget for maintenance. The engineers checked the structure and it is fine. Hardy explained that the State of NH has oversight with the Dam Bureau and they are ultimately responsible for the dam. Kaplan thought that perhaps on the Walker Pond Facebook Page they should ask people to come to town meeting and support the Select Board with regard to Walker Pond. Hardy also suggested people could write letters of support.

New Business:

- Nomination of a Chair and Vice Chair – A **motion** to nominate Alan Hardy as Chair and Jeff Abbe as Vice Chair was made by Gilmore, and seconded by Cousens. Gilmore will be submitting his resignation. Abbe wanted to thank Gilmore for all his hard work. Hardy wanted to note that since Gilmore has been the Chair, there has been a lot of change and a lot of good work. **Motion** passed by a unanimous vote.

Easler asked if Gilmore would continue with his other commissions. Gilmore is going to resign from those as well. He will send an email to Hardy and to the Select Board Upper Merrimack River LAC and Contoocook North Branch LAC. Kaplan wanted to join one of them. It was suggested he speak with Michele Tremblay as she would need to appoint him. Discussion regarding the committees and how to join them.

O'Brien said that the Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program is interested in meeting with anyone who would like to join. You can contact Michele Tremblay. Gilmore explained that the Selectmen have to make a recommendation.

A **motion** to adjourn at 7:53 pm was made by Cousens, seconded by Abbe, and passed by a unanimous vote.

Next Meeting:

- March 15, 2022

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*