

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex**

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 16, 2019 @ 7:00 PM**

Members Present: Commissioners Present: Tom Gilmore Chair, Jeffrey Abbe, Norm LaPierre, Lyman Cousens and Mark Kaplan, Lorrie Carey

Also present: Kellee Jo Easler, Planning & Community Development Director, and Rose Fife, Recording Secretary

Absent: none.

Guest: Henry Carrier, Charlie Niebling, Town Forester

Regular Business:

- Open by Chair at 7:00 pm.
- Roll call by Chair.
- Review and Acceptance of the March 19, 2019 Minutes: A **motion** to approve was made by LaPierre, seconded by Cousens and passed by a unanimous vote.
- Accountant's Report of 4.16.19: Gilmore reported that they zeroed out their regular budget and are doing the expenses out of the Forest Account. The Conservation Capital Fund has \$174,933 in it.
- Town Forest Update: Abbe reports that there is a new laminated map at the kiosk. Abbe got seed and lime and has about 75% of that done. Downed trees were cleaned up. He reports the new field is becoming green now. \$103 was charged for seed. Kaplan offered to give Abbe a helping hand with this in the Town Forest. Abbe also reported that he seeded the leather dump.

Old Business:

- Natural Resource Update – Kaplan reported. He feels they have to get formal approval from the Central NH Planning Commission for the maps they want. There will be some expense to get those maps. He'd like approval to spend up to a certain amount. Gilmore suggested he make a motion. A **motion** to approve an expenditure up to \$4000 for maps from the Central NH Planning Commission was made by Kaplan. Easler said they may need to do a contract with Central NH. The Commission would need to see it and have Alan Hardy's approval. Abbe seconded the motion. Kaplan will try to bring back detail. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

New Business:

- Morrill Easement: Gilmore reported. The Forest Society is involved. NRCS grant will be filed this Friday. He has a meeting this Thursday. They have committed \$130,000 from the Conservation Fund which will include purchase and expenses. He would like a motion that they authorize \$130,000 toward the purchase of the Morrill Easement property. Abbe asked how he came to the \$130,000 amount. Gilmore explained. Abbe asked if it takes care of the future maintenance. Gilmore said yes. There are fees for survey and fees with the Forest Society's professional time, etc. The property was appraised at \$315,000 for the easement. The NRCS will do half of that. Mr. Morrill has decided to take an area in the middle out of

the easement. A **motion** to authorize the expenditure of \$130,000 was made by LaPierre, seconded by Kaplan. Gilmore noted that this easement could occur anytime from 3 to 16 months from now. He will make a presentation to the Select Board of the details. Carey asked questions regarding funding. Abbe asked if Morrill's have agreed to this. The Forest Society is also looking at other grant money to utilize. The town of Boscawen will end up being secondary on the deed. Kaplan asked if there were any legal issue if the Forest Society would bring in their expertise to resolve it. Gilmore said they would. There will be a revised appraisal. Gilmore gave a history of the property and how it came to Conservation. Abbe asked what the 'L' shaped parcel is. Gilmore answered it is 7.5 acres. There are no restrictions on that property other than what is in the town Ordinance. It will have only 100 feet of frontage. It will not be subdivideable. Niebling worked for the Forest Society for 9 years and the requirement for contribution of the stewardship endowment is for easement monitoring and legal issues. Niebling went on to explain how that fund worked. Abbe asked about the NRCS grant and what it would take care of. Gilmore said it does 50% of the appraised value of the easement. The **motion** carried by a unanimous vote.

Carey asked if they were going to apply for an LCHIP grant. Gilmore said they aren't going to try to do one independently. Cousens wanted to be sure they are totally transparent about what's taken place. He wants it noted that it's been done in a very methodical and professional manner.

Cousens asked if there was still funds coming in from land use tax. Easler said that they have had some. There will be more coming.

Gilmore is a member of the Upper Merrimack River Advisory Committee and they had a large wetland property come before them. There is a large development coming up behind the Mobile Station by exit 17. They will be paid a large fee for wetland mitigation.

Charlie Niebling reported on the Creaser property inventory. He emailed the Commission information. He's mapped most or all of the corners. There were a few that were not found. Gilmore asked if there was timber on the property. Niebling said yes. HHP cut it in 2001 or 2002. They cut Grace Creaser's property and the Hardy property behind Ross Express. He's doing an intensive sample and should have the data in a couple of weeks. Gilmore asked if they had a survey. Niebling said there is a good survey for the Creaser lot. He couldn't find the corners on the lots the town has owned for a long time in the back of Queen Street. The total is 376 acres, 5 lots of record. Niebling noted that the old landings are well engineered. They may need to clear them a little.

- Mark Kaplan reported on the Special Places Conference they went to. He gave a report on what he took away from the conference. They should think about how to have more people get involved on the Commission. Maybe through some working groups. He'd like to see some high school kids involved. Gilmore spoke regarding more outreach. Kaplan suggested having a map in the town office when people come in. He has a list of ideas. It was asked if it were appropriate for the Commission to get involved in pushing forward the LCHIP bill that is going before the House. Carey said they could do it individually or as a Commission. The more unique letters Representatives get, the more they listen. The bill status should be under NH General Court web page.

- Abbe's take away from the conference. Amanda Stone put on the classes he took. Approximately 45 plus towns applied for the Bio Blitz grant. Ms. Stone put in a good word for the Commission. He pondered how to get more people involved from all sides. Gilmore spoke about getting a trail from the elementary school to the Town Forest.
- Carey said the Commission used to give a scholarship for a student who was going into this type of field. It would engaged the kids to get involved in order to earn the scholarship.
- Gilmore went to sessions at the seminar regarding the legal issues. He thought approximately 50% of the participants were involved in land trusts.
- Kaplan was at a Five River's event last weekend. Carey and Cousens were also there. Five Rivers will be visiting different towns to talk about their analysis of what the highest value of conservation land in the area is. In the next six months a staff member will come to Boscawen and give a report.
- Cousens reported that OLLI is having a tour in the Town Forest in May. Abbe gave the date of May 13th. Cousens will find out how many people are signed up and he will put an article in the News Vine and the Merrimack Valley Voice. He will try to work out a deal with OLLI to waive the membership fees for Boscawen residents.
- Abbe has put trail maps on the Concord end of the Town Forest.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm was made by Cousens, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2019 at 7pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*