



**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING**

Thursday, January 18, 2018 6:00 PM  
City Hall, Council Chambers, Claremont, NH

**MINUTES  
Approved 2/15/2018**

Mr. Dickerman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and asked for a roll call.

**I. Roll Call**

**Present:** Gary Dickerman, Steve Wood, Scott Magnuson, Eileen Skowronski, Kim Gogan

**Absent:**

**Guest:** Cortney Nichols

**II. Election of Officers**

Mr. Wood nominated Mr. Dickerman for the chair. Ms. Gogan seconded and all were in favor.

Mr. Magnuson nominated Mr. Wood for vice-chair. Ms. Gogan seconded and all were in favor.

**III. Adopt 2018 Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Wood will be unable to attend the regularly scheduled meetings on April 19<sup>th</sup> and June 21<sup>st</sup>. The Commission agreed to change those dates to April 17<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup> respectively.

**Motion:** To accept the meeting schedule for 2018 as amended

**Made by:** Mr. Magnuson      **Second:** Ms. Skowronski

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**IV. Review of Minutes of Preceding Meeting(s)**

**a. November 9, 2017**

**Motion:** To accept the minutes of the November 9, 2017 meeting as written

**Made by:** Mr. Magnuson      **Second:** Ms. Gogan

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**V. Finance Report**

Everything appeared to be in order. There were no questions or comments.

**VI. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**VII. Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

## VIII. New Business

### a. Stevens Brook Trail Layout – Randy Rupp (SCA)

Randy Rupp, SCA Regional Program Manager, gave the Commission a brief summary of SCA and its programs. He then provided a bit more information about the proposals SCA had offered for the trail layout project at Stevens Brook. He said the cost estimates he had provided were based on standard model programs that SCA offers. They would be modified to reflect a more customized program based on the Commission's priorities. SCA helps raise funds to offset the cost of the programs.

Mr. Rupp said SCA's prime focus is to create the next generation of conservationists, so their programs are all centered around kids, environmental education, and hands-on experiences. There are national, regional and local-based programs. SCA handles all of the logistics of each program.

The next step, if the Commission decides to collaborate, is to identify the Commission's priorities for the project. SCA will help with trail layout and design, structures, etc. Ms. Gogan will provide the connection with the school district. SCA will share their curriculum and lesson plans. SCA will do the recruiting of students.

Mr. Rupp asked the Commission to develop its vision for the project and decide how much money it has to spend on it.

Outside visitors are welcome to observe the students in action. Often the students enjoy showing off what they are learning and doing. They often do the publicity for the project and set up events around it. SCA also welcomes outside expertise. Randy will share the lessons, curriculum

The Commission thanked Mr. Rupp for his time and information and said they will be in touch.

### b. Expedited Wetlands Permit Application – Citizen St. culvert (S. Sweet)

Scott Sweet, Public Works Director, came before the Commission to present a project that requires an expedited wetlands permit. There has been substantial erosion along the upstream side of the Citizen Street bridge on the Sugar River. The erosion could compromise the bridge abutment, so he would like to see the problem resolved now, before significant damage occurs. He is proposing to put in riprap 50 feet on both sides of the stream. A coffer dam, sandbags and erosion control fencing will be set up. The vegetation will be cut, then the riprap put in. All disturbed areas will be loamed and seeded when the project is done.

There is also a footing underneath the bridge that is separated (the bridge is on pilings); this will be fixed at the same time.

Mr. Sweet was asking that the application be signed as soon as possible so the project can out to bid in the spring.

He offered to show the Commission the plans for the project.

He said they will have to remove some logs from the center pier (the nose pier) – most likely during low flow time in the summer.

There were no other questions or concerns.

**Motion:** To approve and sign the expedited wetlands permit application for stabilization of the Citizen Street Bridge embankments.

**Made by:** Mr. Wood      **Second:** Ms. Skowronski

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

Mr. Dickerman will sign the applications (6 copies) at the Planning and Development office on Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

**c. Track removal at Market Basket (DPW request)**

Mr. Sweet said he had been asked by a City resident why the railroad tracks are still in the ground in the Market Basket entrance. He said he thought the tracks were still owned by the railroad company at the time the plaza was built and no one wanted to disturb the new driveway. Mr. Sweet said the tracks do tend to cause pot holes on the Washington Street side of the tracks.

Mr. Sweet said it wasn't clear who has responsibility in this matter, but he also wasn't looking to resolve anything either. He said he had just told the person who asked about it that he would look into it.

**d. Rail Trail Oversight Discussion**

Jim Feleen from Parks and Recreation would like to apply for a grant to make improvements to the trail between Chestnut Street and the bridge. He is asking for the Commission's approval to move forward with the application.

Mrs. Bearse clarified that this grant would be to hire an engineer to create a plan for improving the trail surface, assess drainage and culvert needs, create an invasive species management plan, inspect and evaluate the bridge, and develop the cost estimate and budget for the project. A second grant would implement the plan.

**Motion:** To authorize applying for a grant to create a plan for improvements to the rail trail from Chestnut Street to and including the bridge over the Sugar River.

**Made by:** Ms. Gogan      **Second:** Mr. Magnuson

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

Mr. Dickerman polled the board on where everyone stands on the rail trail issue:

Ms. Skowronski – Parks & Recreation has plans and enthusiasm and a vision of how the trail fits into the benefit of the community; they have thought about this and have ideas.

Ms. Gogan – This topic has consumed a lot of time; she wants the Commission to be free to focus on other areas; bigger and broader-scoped projects.

Mr. Dickerman – Things always circle back to who pays for things.

Mr. Wood – It's a recreational rail trail – we have a parks and recreation department to take care of parks; why should it be the Conservation Commission? It makes more sense for it to be under Parks & Recreation Department.

Mr. Magnuson – The main use of the trail is recreation; the Commission's efforts will have more impact elsewhere.

The Commission decided to meet with Parks and Recreation Director, Mark Brislin, to discuss the matter with him before formally voting to relinquish oversight of the trail.

**e. Approve payment of NHACC membership dues**

**Motion:** To pay \$419.00 for NHACC 2018 membership dues

**Made by:** Ms. Skowronski                      **Second:** Mr. Wood

**Vote:** unanimous in favor

**IX. Communications**

The Commission agreed to offer financial aid to students wishing to attend Barry Conservation Camp for one more year. If no one responds, then the Commission will consider funding a field trip through the school system instead.

**X. Other Business**

Mr. Dickerman suggested getting a second proposal for the Stevens Brook trail layout project from Lew Shelley at SnowHawk LLC, a trail design and construction company. Mr. Shelley worked on the trails at Moody Park. The Commission agreed to solicit a written proposal from Mr. Shelley.

Mr. Magnuson presented to Ms. Skowronski a sheet of stamps depicting pollinator plants in recognition of her work on pollinator gardens in the City. Ms. Skowronski graciously accepted the stamps and a round of applause.

The Commission welcomed Cortney Nichols, who has applied to be a (returning) member of the Commission.

**XI. Future Agenda Items**

**XII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting

**Made by:** Mr. Magnuson                      **Second:** Mr. Wood

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:37.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*de Forest Bearse*