



**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING**

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 6:00 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers, Claremont, NH

**MINUTES
Approved 5/17/2018**

Mr. Dickerman called the meeting to order at 6:22 PM and asked for a roll call.

I. Roll Call

Present: Gary Dickerman, Kim Gogan, Scott Magnuson, Eileen Skowronski

Absent: Nick Koloski, Steve Wood

II. Review of Minutes of Preceding Meeting(s)

a. March 15, 2018

Motion: To accept the minutes as typed

Made by: Ms. Skowronski **Second:** Ms. Gogan

Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Finance Report

Board reviewed the finance report. There has been no activity since the last report.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Old Business

a. Stevens Brook Conservation Easement

i. Permanent Access

Mr. Dickerman said that Ms. Merrill had put together a letter to all of the property owners affected by the Stevens Brook Conservation Easement to start the conversation about permanent access. The letter had gone out today.

ii. Trail layout project

Mr. Dickerman said he needed to get back to Lew Shelley about the trail project as Mr. Shelley's schedule is starting to fill with other projects. The consensus of the Commission was that they are definitely interested in working with Mr. Shelley, but not until the access issue is resolved.

iii. Water Quality Program – Robin Tamula

There was a mix-up in meeting dates. Ms. Tamula will be invited to attend the May 17th meeting.

iv. Expansion?

The Commission decided to leave this item on the agenda until they have guidance from the Upper Valley Land Trust or the NHACC on how to approach landowners for conservation easements.

b. Rail Trail Oversight

A letter has been sent to the Mayor and City Council regarding the Commission's desire to relinquish oversight of the trail. The Commission will wait until the matter is placed on the Council's agenda for discussion.

c. Annual Budget Development

No action was taken on the budget.

d. Forest Management Plan

This will remain on the agenda while other parties work on getting the update moving.

e. Natural Resource Inventory

Mr. Dickerman has invited Jeff Littleton to the May 17th meeting to discuss next steps for the Natural Resources Inventory.

f. Goals and Objectives for 2018

Mr. Dickerman has reached out to Kelly Stettner, founder of the Black River Action Team (B.R.A.T) to discuss how the Commission might start a similar program for the Sugar River. (<http://blackrivercleanup.wixsite.com/blackriveractionteam>) and coordinate it with the Source-to-Sea annual program.

Ms. Skowronski is still interested in creating some short videos on various topics.

Mr. Dickerman said the Commission can have its own Facebook page. He talked to Dawn Dextrase at Sullivan County Conservation District about using the page to help promote the District's programs. The page will also be useful with helping to promote the Commission's work.

g. NHACC Annual Survey 2018

The Commission completed the survey together.

1. What are the top 2 most important goals for your conservation commission?

a. Public outreach

- i. Work to promote Sullivan County Activities – ask them to host some events here in Claremont
- ii. Post visuals of ecologically significant areas
- iii. Video of Ms. Tamula teaching the students about water quality monitoring
- iv. Do a program on the Culvert replacement at Whitewater Reservoir or the solar panels at the sewer treatment plant or composting at the sewer treatment plant (have students do filming?)

b. Ecological assessment model to rank individual parcels

How have you been successful in meeting your goals? *NHACC can help with strategies on engaging the public.*

How can NHACC help you reach your goals? *Too early to tell!*

2. What are the principal means or activities by which your conservation commission contributes to your town?
 - a. *Completion of the Master Plan (natural Resources Chapter)*
 - b. *Review wetlands and forestry permit applications*
 - c. *Creation of pollinator garden*
 - d. *Oversight of the Rail Trail*
 - e. *Work on reducing invasive species*
3. Do other town boards seek the guidance of the conservation commission in natural resource protection? *Yes – the zoning board, planning board and parks & recreation commission; also, the public works department*
4. Does your commission have a voice in issues related to:
 - a. Natural Resources Inventories? – *yes*
 - b. Mapping
 - c. Conservation easements – *yes*
 - d. Shoreland protection – *n/a*
 - e. Steep Slopes
 - f. Wetlands – *yes*
 - g. Lake Host – *n/a*
 - h. Logging permits – *yes*
 - i. Fundraising
5. Are you proud of something you have done in the past few years that you would be willing to share on the Resources pages of our website Members section or in our E-news? *NRI; work done on Stevens Brook; Conservation Plan; defined mission; Master Plan update; follow-up to Moody Park tree cutting'*
6. Do you have any specific suggestions for topics, resources for our website NHACC.org? *Best use of social media; best way to approach landowners for easements*
7. Which additional topics would you like to see covered in our E-newsletter? *Can't think of any*
8. NHACC regularly monitors legislation related to conservation on the state level and provides legislative updates for you. Is this activity helpful to you? *Yes*
 - a. What legislative or state priorities would you like us to focus on? *Perhaps getting on board the Wild Goose public access issue; advocate for timely maintenance of the Ashley Ferry boat landing in Claremont; advocacy for any public access issues; invasive species; landowner involvement*
9. What are you struggling with that you'd like us to help you with? *Landowner outreach*
10. What topics would you like NHACC to provide more regional training on? *(no answer)*

h. City-wide clean-up day

On Saturday, April 21st from 9 am to noon Commissioners will pick up trash at the boat launch. If the ground is still too covered with snow or if the weather is bad, it will be postponed to the following Saturday.

i. Discussion on expenditures

Ms. Gogan asked the Commission if they would be willing to donate \$1000 to help fund a day-class for the eighth grade at Sargent Camp in May. The full cost is \$3000. The school will look for the remaining \$2000 in various areas of their budget. The school will cover the transportation. 80-100 students will participate.

There was discussion on whether this is an eligible expense under RSA 36-A. It was agreed that the precedent had already been set with funding tuition to Barry Conservation Camp.

Motion: That we provide funding for Sargent Camp for up to 100 students or more to go to a daytrip at Sargent Camp in the amount of \$1000 on the condition that when they complete the trip that we get a report from (hopefully presented here) a teacher or some of the children about the trip and contingent upon the school obtaining the rest of the funding needed for the trip.

Made by: Ms. Skowronski

Second: Mr. Magnuson

Vote: Unanimous in favor

VI. New Business

VII. Communications

The Commission received a letter from City Planner, Mike McCrory, asking for funds to put toward a required match to a NH Municipal Technical Assistance grant he is applying for. The grant would assist in improving local housing regulations. The project relates to the Natural Resources master plan chapter objectives of assessing current levels of resource protection in the zoning, subdivision and site plan regulations. The assessment would be part of the project.

The Commission was in favor of providing funds, but wished to speak further about it with Mr. McCrory and the absent Commission members before committing to a specific dollar amount. They are willing to hold a special meeting to accommodate Mr. McCrory's timeline if necessary.

Mr. Dickerman said the Q to C grant has been announced. \$45,000 is available with a maximum of \$10,000 award per organization.

VIII. Other Business

IX. Future Agenda Items

X. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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