



**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING**

Thursday August 16, 2018 6:00 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers, Claremont, NH

MINUTES

Approved with corrections 9/20/2018

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 (left the meeting at 7:34PM), Scott Magnuson, Kim Gogan, Eileen Skowronski

Absent:

II. Special Guest – Elizabeth “Lizzy” Benware – Barry Camp “Mini-Camp” attendee

Miss Benware told the Commission about her time at camp. She had a wonderful time and hopes to go again next year. Great job, Lizzie!

III. Review of Minutes of Preceding Meeting(s)

a. July 19, 2018

Motion: To accept as presented

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

IV. Finance Report –

The Commission viewed the latest finance report. It was noted that the Commission had received \$2000 from the fiscal 2018 transfer. The Commission also received \$44.76 in interest in the 4th quarter. Total interest received for the year = \$136.33. Balance in the account = \$10,256.97.

V. Public Comment – There was no one present.

VI. Old Business

a. Stevens Brook

i. Water Testing

The state sponsors a program called “Volunteer River Assessment Program” (VRAP) that provides training and supplies for volunteers to do water quality testing. The department is waiting to hear from the program manager if municipal conservation commissions are allowed to participate.

ii. Trail Development

Due to the estimated cost of the project, the Commission must receive three bids from contractors before awarding the project. The estimates from SCA and Lew Shelley constitute two bids. The Commission needs a third. Mr. Dickerman is communicating with a third company to get the third bid.

iii. Area 2 – pine trees, site visit with Lionel Chute

Mr. Dickerman walked Area 2 with Lionel Chute (Sullivan County Conservation District Manager) to review the vegetation and ask if it would be appropriate to remove the pine trees. While Mr. Chute had no objections to removing the trees (the tops are already diseased), it was later discovered that the trees were part of the original planting plan. It was agreed that the Commission should seek approval from DES before proceeding further.

Mr. Dickerman noted that they found invasives – honeysuckle and bittersweet – on the site. He suggested that the Commission get together when the weather is cooler to remove them.

b. Sugar River - finalize plans for Sept. clean-up

The Connecticut River Conservancy-sponsored “Source to Sea” clean-up event is scheduled for 9/28th (a Friday) and 9/29. Mr. Dickerman will meet with the river steward, Ron Rhodes, to review potential clean-up sites for the Commission. The Conservancy asks volunteers/groups to register if they plan to join the clean-up efforts.

Last year, volunteers from the Eversource office did a clean-up along the Sugar River. They would like to collaborate with the Commission this year. However, they only do volunteer activities during working hours, which would limit participation by most of the Commissioners and the public.

It was agreed that Mr. Dickerman, Mr. Wood and Ms. Skowronski will join Eversource volunteers on Friday, 9/28 from 9 AM to 2 PM, to do a clean-up of the Sugar River behind McDonalds and near the Visitor Center.

A second clean-up will be on 9/29 between 9 AM and 2 PM at locations to be determined. The event will be posted on Facebook to solicit volunteers. Mr. Dickerman will register the groups.

The Commission will hold a special meeting on 9/13 to finalize details.

c. Conservation Plan

The Commission reviewed the Conservation Plan that they had adopted on July 21, 2016 as updates were needed. Updates that were agreed to include:

- Page 1, bullet 6 – Strike the words, “and oversees the” to read: *Compiles information being collected in regards to water quality monitoring in the Sugar River and other public drinking water sources.* Ms. Skowronski volunteered to gather information on who is taking water quality samples in Claremont and where their data is stored.
- Page 1, bullet 9 – Change to read, “*Promote educational opportunities for youth.*”

- Page 2, paragraph 2 – Change the first sentence to read, “*The Claremont Master Plan was updated in 2017.*”
- Page 3, Goal #1 - add an objective under the second Recommendation, to read, “*Sponsor and organize public outreach events that showcase biodiversity.*”
- Page 3, Goal #2 – Add a 2nd objective that reads, “*Host field sessions that educate the public on specific practices.*”
- Page 3, Goal #3 – Delete Objective 1
- Page 4, Goal #4 – Change the 1st Recommendation to read, “*Collaborate with Parks and Recreation to promote education regarding conservation on the City’s park lands.*”
- Page 4, Goal #5 – add the word “City’s” to the Goal to read, “*Support Implementation of the City’s Current Forest Management Plan*”.
- Page 4, Goal #6 – delete this goal altogether
- Page 5, Goal #7 – change the Recommendation to Objective 1.
- Page 5, Goal #7 – Add a new Recommendation to read, “*Continue to serve as advocates for the access with the City and the State.*”
- Page 5, Goal #7 – Add Objective 2: *Continue to advocate for timely maintenance of and upgrades to the boat launch.*
- Page 5, Goal #7 – Add Objective 3: *Sponsor twice-annual clean-up events for the boat launch area.*
- Page 8, Appendix B – Update to reflect 2017 Master Plan
- Page 10 – Delete Appendix 3

The Commission will review the amended Plan at the next meeting.

d. Overall Goals and Objectives for 2018 for the Commission

The Commission amended the Goals and Objectives as follows:

- Delete item 2 (Research funding for Stevens Brook expenses.)
- Item 4 – Lionel Chute felt that the Commission should first focus on
 - raising awareness of the City’s natural resources and why they matter;
 - forging relationships with the City’s landowners and then perhaps
 - focusing on the areas of ecological significance.

Ms. Gogan suggested that this type of public outreach activity (as described by Mr. Chute) is mentioned in goal 3 – “*Continue with ideas on public education and outreach.*” She clarified that there are two types of public outreach – that which is directed toward the general public, such as through Facebook, the pollinator garden projects and the Source-to-Sea events; and those that are directed toward specific people, such as hosting gatherings of specific landowners. Mr. Dickerman will reach out to Mr. Littleton and tell him that the parcel rating project is on hold for now.

- Ms. Gogan suggested adding a goal of recruiting more commission members.
- In addition to learning about mapping systems, it was suggested that *creating large-scale maps for public display* be added to it.

e. Pollinator Garden(s) update

Ms. Skowronski said she has planted the plants that she recently purchased and weeded the garden, all the while displaying her Conservation Commission t-shirt. She said she found an area in Monadnock Park and a strip on North Street. She has small Pollinator Garden signs that she can post in the gardens, take a photo of them, and post them on Facebook.

VII. New Business

a. Facebook

Ms. Gogan and Mr. Magnuson have set up the Facebook page for the Commission. (Mr. Wood left the meeting at this point.)

The Commission looked at the page and talked about ideas for posting. The challenge will be in keeping the page fresh and continually posting content.

Great job, Kim and Scott!

VIII. Communications

- a. Land Resources Management File #2018-02330, 155-157 Charlestown Road, Tax Map 165/Lot 13** – letter addressing mowing in the wet meadow in front of the new Ford dealership
- b.** Mr. Dickerman commented on a recent article in the newspaper regarding an exchange of City-owned land for an easement along the Sugar River for a future river walk.

IX. Other Business

There was no other business.

X. Future Agenda Items

XI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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