

These minutes are subject to possible corrections/ revisions at a subsequent
Exeter Conservation Commission Meeting

Draft Minutes
Exeter Conservation Commission
May 12, 2015

Call to Order

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices on the above date.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Belanger (BOS Rep), Virginia Raub (Treasurer), Carlos Guindon (Vice-Chair), Jay Gregoire(Chair), Peter Richardson, Cynthia Field, Mike Field, Don Briselden, Bill Campbell
STAFF PRESENT: Kristin Murphy (Natural Resource Planner), Sarah McGraw (Recording Secretary).

2. Public Comment: None

Action Items

1. Challenges Facing Great Bay

Jeff Barnum a Great Bay-Piscataqua Water keeper, presented on the efforts and challenges of preserving Great Bay. Topics included, the importance of eel grass in the bay, work to recreate oyster beds, nitrogen loading in great bay and efforts to minimize nitrogen. Mr. Barnum also cited examples where municipalities such as New Castle adopted restrictions on fertilizer use. For more information contact: Jeff Barnum JBarnum@clf.org

2. Great Dam Removal Wetland Application-

Peter Walker, with VHB representing the Town of Exeter, updated the Conservation Commission on the Great Dam Removal project and the submission of a wetland application. The dredge and fill permit is for 30,000 square feet of impacted area. There will be re-grading for the stability of property adjacent to the project. Mr. Walker gave a brief history of the decision to remove the dam by the Town. He discussed the alternatives considered and the final decision. There is a sediment management plan, mitigation of historical impacts and a re-vegetation plan as part of the mitigation efforts.

Ms. Raub asked what would happen if the project were delayed. Mr. Walker confirmed if the project were to miss the fall deadline, the project would be delayed for about a year. Mr. Walker stated that the applicants were hoping the Conservation Commission would be supportive of the application to go on record with the Department of Environmental Services and the Army Corps of Engineers.

*Ms. Raub moved to support the application, second by Mr. Gregoire. **VOTE: Unanimous***

Mr. Briselden entered the meeting at 8:00 pm.

3. Henderson Swasey Forest Management Plan Implementation

a. Project Update

Mr. Briselden and Charlie Moreno had presented the plan to the Board of Selectmen for review and input. Mr. Briselden outlined the risks for going forward with the planned tree harvesting.

b. Forester Contracts for Harvest Oversight, Invasive Plant Treatment Oversight

Ms. Murphy presented the contracts. The contracts included one for the harvester and one for oversight with invasive species removal. She added that Mr. Moreno suggested that the amount allotted for invasive removal is low. Ms. Murphy said that the work agreement is modeled after previous agreement and the town will sign additional contracts with the logging company which would include an invasive species contract. Ms. Raub said she would like to see the schedule of payment. Ms. Murphy said they could not foresee the schedule as it depends on the harvest. Mr.

*Mr. Richardson moved to sign the agreement with Charlie Moreno, second by Mr. Guindon. **VOTE: Unanimous***

Mr. Briselden suggested from his talks with Mr. Moreno, that the Conservation Commission should flag one side of the trails to assist Charlie Moreno with mapping harvest routes. The logging company will have to cross the trails. He also discussed the importance of explaining to the public why it is healthy to thin out the forest.

c. Outreach

Ms. Raub said she would like to do a photo journal. Ms. Eberhardt who was not present at the meeting, had volunteered to create an educational flyer about logging in the Town Forest. Copies of the management plan are available on the Conservation Commission webpage.

4. Committee Reports

a. Trails

Mr. Gregoire reported on the last meeting of the Trails Committee. There was some talk about removing leaves on the trails in wet areas where wet areas had accumulated. Mr. Richardson suggested dealing with trouble spots individually and shoveling out areas where water collects. Mr. Gregoire said that the Committee would like to hold a bridge building workshop. Mr. Richardson reported flagging was beginning on the trails outside of the new tennis club. Ms. Raub said she had trail posts waiting to be staked in her garage. Ms. Murphy added there are two passport posts that need replacing and two trail head posts that need to be installed along with interior posts and the McDonald post that was pulled out. Ms. Murphy suggested using Eagle Scouts to help.

b. Outreach

Ms. Raub said she and Mr. Richardson wrapped Fraser fir seedlings for the spring tree program.

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5. Nomination and Election of Officers

There was discussion at a Board of Selectmen meeting that only regular members can serve as officers. It was noted that Ms. Raub was an officer and an alternate. It was decided that Ms. Raub and Mr. Guindon would request to be regular members and Mr. and Mrs. Field request to be alternates.

6. Approval of Minutes: April 14, 2015

Ms. Raub moved to approve the minutes as amended, second by Mr. Richardson. VOTE: Unanimous

7. Natural Resource Planner's Report and Correspondence

Ms. Murphy said the Department of Environmental Services was looking for help with the VRAP program in Exeter, sampling water and logging data. Ms. Murphy reported that Ms. Raub and Mr. Richardson attended a wetland mitigation workshop for which she requested to expend funds on the registration, \$50 total.

Mr. Gregoire moved to approval the expenditure of \$50 for the workshop on wetlands, second by Mr. Guindon. VOTE: Unanimous

8. Other Business

9. Next Meeting: June 9, 2015

Ms. Raub moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Gregoire. VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted;

Sarah McGraw, Recording Secretary