

Draft Minutes

Conservation Commission

11/14/17

1. Introduction to Members Present

Present at the meeting are Kristen Murphy, Anne Surman, Sally Ward, Dave Short, Andrew Koff, Virginia Raub, Bill Campbell, Carlos Guindon, Todd Piskovitz, Marie Richey and Alyson Eberhardt. The meeting began at 7:00pm.

2. Public Comment

Joanne Jacob said that she did not think that there was enough markings on the trails in the town forests. She said that bikers often make their own trails, which can be confusing. She offered to go out on the trails and mark them with paint. Chairman Campbell said that it would be difficult to mark trails at this time of the year, because it is too cold for the paint to set. The commission thought it was a great idea for the spring, and suggested more detailed maps and junction signage.

3. Action Items

a. Property Management

i. Property Mowing Contract Selection

Ms. Murphy said that one of the bids was from David O'Hearn for a total of \$1,825. There are trees that have fallen on the properties and the added cost for cutting these would make a new total of \$2,125. They received a second bid from Dave Martin, who previously had mowed the properties in the past. His total would be \$1,450. The budget for the mowing is about \$1,800, and they had an additional \$300 allocated for the Raynes property which is not needed, so there is enough in the budget for both.

For the Morrisett property, if they were only to mow half the field it would cost \$250 as opposed to \$475 for the full field with Mr. O'Hearn, and it would be \$300 as opposed to \$525 for Mr. Martin. Chairman Campbell pointed out that mowing half may be beneficial ~~for to leave~~ seeds ~~on for~~ wildlife the ground. Ms. Murphy said that generally, in the past, Mr. Martin has included the cost of removing any fallen trees in his price. The commission agreed to mow half of the Morrisette property. The total difference in the two bids would be \$625.

**MOTION:** Selectwoman Eberhardt moved to allocate \$1,225 to mow the properties, including half of Morrisette. Ms. Surman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Ms. Raub suggested splitting the properties up among the bids, but they would have to send the bids back for re-submission. Ms. Murphy said she'd like to make sure that somebody had examined the property to determine the work necessary, to prevent additional expenses.

ii. Property Monitoring Report

Ms. Murphy said that with the properties that the commission had committed to monitoring and with the work of the two interns, all of the parcels of land should be finished in the next three weeks. She thought that next year they should do a summer internship because of scheduling issues and

the hunting season, or suggested that maybe the properties where hunting is permitted could be finished earlier in the year.

### iii. Raynes Listing & Signage

Ms. Murphy said that Ms. Raub and Don Brisseton and herself had worked together to apply to put the Raynes property on the state's historical places register. The application was approved. It will help the conservation commission become more palatable for additional funds in the future. John Porter, an author with a book on historic barns in the region, asked for photos of Raynes to highlight the barn because of its unique silo. He'll use the pictures in a new book.

Kathy Norton has ~~installed the~~gotten the new sign for Raynes. Public Works will install it. Chairman Campbell suggested that they could do a publicity article about it for Ms. Norton when she returns in the spring. Ms. Murphy said that the Preservation Alliance has reached out and wanted to feature it on their 52 Barns in 52 Weeks feature. Chairman Campbell said that the commission has been working with public works to fix damage to windows on the property.

### iv. Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee Member Appointment

The committee needs to have two representatives from the conservation commission. Ms. Raub is one, and the commission needs to appoint another. Ms. Raub said that the committee does not meet often and is not a large commitment. Ms. Ward volunteered to be on the committee.

### v. Invasive Study Committee

Mr. Guindon said that the burning bush on the southern side of the Henderson-Swasey Town forest has heavily invaded. Bittersweet is also a main concern because it wraps itself around trees and chokes them. Japanese barberry is also an issue. Mr. Short asked if they should focus on the northern side because the southern side is already too invaded. Mr. Guindon said that there was a lot of burning bush on the east side as well. He was concerned about the gasline there being the focal entry on the lot, and mentioned that the abandoned farmland on the neighboring property is likely the source of most of the seeds that have invaded. Mr. Campbell said that since burning bush comes back so quickly, we should focus on those areas which have not been invaded yet. The app they are using to map the invasive species is called IPANE. Ms. Raub asked if goats would help the burning bush. Guindon said that they might, but the issue is that once the burning bush is gone garlic mustard might come up.

### b. Trails

#### i. Oakland Trails Project

Mr. Short said that the trail has been moved. Another trail parallel to the highway was used as the entrance to the new trail. The trail was built on higher ground than before as well. There is still some rockwork needing to be done, but the project is about 95% done. A sign was made asking people not to enter the portion that was shut down. They did not need any wood for the project. Chairman Campbell was concerned about the treated wood from the plank bridge, which will disintegrate much slower than untreated wood. Mr. Short said that the pressure treated wood will be removed. CP Lumber donated extra wood to replace the bridge system.

#### ii. Trail Maintenance Needs

There are other minor projects that need to be done in some areas. Ms. Murphy said that there is \$300 left in the budget. Mr. Short said they would need decking to make treads. They will get an estimate for the cost, and can store the wood at public works so that they can use it for future projects.

**MOTION:** Ms. Eberhardt moved that the commission spend up to \$300 for the project. Mr. Piskovitz seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

c. Outreach

i. Barry Conservation Camp Contest

Mr. Koff said spoke about the essay contest for the Barry Conservation camp in Berlin, New Hampshire for Summer 2018. The essay is simply why you would like to attend the camp, and the contest is open to Exeter residents aged 10-16. It was posted on the website, Facebook, and the Exeter newsletter. They may reach out to schools and scouting organizations, and could ask businesses in town to post flyers in their windows.

ii. NHACC Partnership Project

Ms. Murphy said that she visited the middle school last week, and introduced wetlands and the importance of buffers as well as stormwater pollution to 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The students used Google Earth to measure the buffer size around some wetlands. They also tested water samples, and measured dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and turbidity. They worked with the students to come up with their own design for a study. She thought the kids were very engaged.

iii. E\$RLAC Dues

Ms. Murphy said that this year, the suggested dues for ERLAC are \$200. Normally, \$100 goes to E\$RLAC, \$630 goes to NHACC, \$100 goes to the Lamprey River Watershed Association, and \$100 goes to Southeast Land Trust for a total of \$930. The commission had only budgeted \$100 for the dues, and agreed that they would vote on the total and look at the treasurer's report to see if there was an additional \$100 that could be found in the budget.

**MOTION:** Ms. Raub moved to approve \$100 E\$RLAC, \$100 for the Lamprey River Watershed Association, \$100 for Southeast Land Trust, and \$630 for NHACC respectively. Mr. Piskovitz seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

d. CC Representatives Report on Other Committees

This was not covered during this meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes: October 10th Meeting

Mr. Campbell suggested that on page 4, they change it to "open to be selected by conservation members as well". He also suggested that the part about the Swasey property be deleted.

**MOTION:** Ms. Raub moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Richey seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously, with Ms. Eberhardt abstaining.

5. Other Business

Mr. Piskovitz brought up a site walk on Thursday that will be a combined effort between the conservation commission and the planning board for Rose Farm. They will meet at 8:30am on Wadleigh Street. There will be another road put in to the property, and the property is complex with some areas clear and some covered in brush.

Ms. Eberhardt said that the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership of the EPA will have a conference this year (they hold one every five years), which will be on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Registration is required. She also brought up an event called Stories from the Field, which features storytellers who are citizen scientists. This event will be on the evening of December 8<sup>th</sup>. She also mentioned a program called coastal research volunteers, where there are opportunities to volunteer to collect data for coastal research. She then talked about a project creating a resource of sand dune plant for coastal inhabitants.

Mr. Campbell attended the annual meeting of the NHACC where he heard two talks, one about considering wildlife ~~while on~~when planning trails, and also one on receiving grants. He also attended a meeting of the conservation commission roundtable, involving numerous different seacoast region towns. They talked about the right to know law and what constitutes a meeting. He said that Portsmouth has done a study on possible conservation lands. He brought up doing something for Pete Richardson. There is a plaque on a bench in Founder's Park with his name, and he suggested writing a letter to Mr. Richardson's wife on behalf of the commission. And, he suggested naming a trail "Pete's Path" and placing a sign on it.

6. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (12/5/17), Submission Deadline (11/22/17)

**MOTION:** Mr. Guindon moved that the commission enter into a non-public session. Mr. Piskovitz seconded the motion. A roll call vote, and it passed unanimously at 8:30 pm.

Public session reconvened at 9:05 pm.

A motion was made to seal the minutes. A roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by recording secretary Samantha Cave.