

Exeter Conservation Commission  
May 12, 2020  
Virtual Meeting  
Approved Minutes

**Call to Order**

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call) and New Members Welcome

Present at tonight's meeting were Chair Andrew Koff, Dave Short, Treasurer, , Kristen Murphy, Alyson Eberhardt, Sally Ward, Clerk, Bill Campbell, Carlos Guindon, and Julie Gilman, Select Board Liaison, Lindsey White, Alternate, Trevor Mattera, Alternate Ginny Raub, Alternate, Nick Campion, Alternate and Donald Clement, Alternate

Members present indicated there was no one else present in the room with them during this meeting.

Absent: Daryl Browne, Select Board Alternate

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7 PM and indicated Alternate Ginny Raub is voting.

Mr. Koff read the meeting preamble indicated that an emergency exists and the provisions of RSA 91-A:2 III (b) are being invoked. As federal, state and local officials have determined gatherings of ten or more people pose a substantial risk to the community and the meeting imperative to the continued operation of Town and government and services which are vital to public, health, safety and confidence. This meeting will be conducted without a quorum physically present in the same location and welcome members of the public accessing the meeting remotely.

*Virtual Meetings can be watched on Channel 22 and on Exeter TV's Facebook and YouTube pages.*

*To participate in public comment, click this link: <https://exeternh.zoom.us/j/88665709878>*

*To participate via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 886 6570 9878*

*Use the "Raise Hand" button to alert the chair you wish to speak. On the phone, press \*9.*

*More instructions for how to participate can be found here:  
<https://www.exeternh.gov/townmanager/virtual-town-meetings>*

2. Public Comment

Dawn Jelley requested to read letter she sent concerning the CUP application (Map/Lot 83-56). Ms. Jelley expressed concerns about proper input and the flooding of Nelson Drive, the change of the water flow, allowance of barn and the proposed structure (1,444 SF) exceeding size limitations.

Mr. Koff noted the applicant is not present and the application has not come before the Commission for Public Hearing at this time. However, the letter will be kept on file until it does.

## **Action Items**

### 1. Election of Officers

#### Chair

Mr. Short nominated Andrew Koff as Chair. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### Vice-Chair – tabled

#### Treasurer

Mr. Campbell nominated Mr. Short as Treasurer. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### Clerk

Chair Koff nominated Ms. Ward as Clerk. Mr. Short seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### Alternate to Full Member

Mr. Mattera, who is an alternate, expressed an interest in becoming a full member and will need to go before the Select Board to be appointed and then be sworn in.

### 2. Deb Humiston – Self Guided Orienteering Event Request

Deb Humiston and her orienteering organization has held an annual orienteering event for the past few years. She has now reinvented the program to align with our current situation and would like to hold a virtual event which she presented at this meeting.

Ms. Humiston indicated she is doing a virtual event in June and will print maps and find markers. There is an app which will help with the event that will help guide based on maps. Ms. Humiston expects to be ready around Father's Day.

Ms. Eberhardt asked how long the controls (flag markers) would be up and Ms. Humiston noted from three weeks to a month.

Mr. Campbell asked if the event depended on weather and Ms. Humiston indicated no, people can go when they want.

Mr. Campbell motioned to approve the self-guided orienteering event scheduled for June, as described. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion of active/passive recreation allowances on proposed conservation land in association with Gateway at Exeter LLC mixed used development on Epping Road (Tax Map 47 Lots 6 and 7) including draft deed and stewardship plans (Brendan Quigley and Thom Monahan)

Ms. Murphy provided a copy of the November 12<sup>th</sup> project description which was offered as wetland mitigation.

Ms. Murphy indicated the applicant provided the draft deed and baseline report. The final steps will be completing the Phase I report and finalizing the surveyed plan and deed. The deed should be reviewed by a few members of the Commission prior to making a recommendation for acceptance to the Select Board and then needs to be reviewed by Town Counsel.

#### Active/Passive Recreation Allowances

Ms. Murphy noted the Planning Board is meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and is looking for recommendation from the Conservation Commission concerning use, trails, passive-non-mechanized passive recreation and hunting.

Mr. Clement asked what the definition of passive recreation was and Ms. Murphy indicated on some properties they are limited to non-mechanized use and others will allow mountain bikes and hunting as well. Mr. Clement noted this parcel connects to the Little River Conservation area and maybe recommendations should be consistent and to keep mechanized out. Mr. Clement recommended no hunting and excluding camping.

Mr. Campbell indicated he hasn't walked the property but knows there are vernal pools and would have concerns with even mountain bikers and would prefer to leave sections natural and not put trails everywhere. Chair Koff indicated he would like to do a site walk as well.

Brendan Quigley advised there are no trails and didn't recall mountain bikes being on the documents and would not include motorized vehicles. It would be handled the same as the Little River parcel. Mr. Campbell noted the language does appear in the management plan. Mr. Quigley agreed to take that out, the plan is new and very flexible.

Chair Koff noted they have submitted documentation, including a management plan and the Commission is looking for signatures on the document. Mr. Quigley noted the baseline report is complicated and attests to current conditions which doesn't speak to the management plan that the federal folks have asked for at all.

Mr. Guindon noted he knows the property well and would be concerned about putting too much in because of vernal pools there and favors leaving as conservation land without passive recreation use

and would not encourage hunting either. There is already hunting around the property. There are a lot of wet areas to try to connect. The Little River trails get a lot of use.

Ms. Ward noted she agreed on hunting and is concerned it is too close to the development. Ms. Ward is in favor of passive recreation that would not impact the vernal pools and agrees a site walk would be useful.

Mr. Quigley indicated it could be managed similar to Little River but without a whole trail system.

Ms. Raub indicated she was opposed to hunting due to proximity to the development. There is very little green space and looking at the lower corner feel obligated to allow access back there to give some green space.

Mr. Clement indicated he likes the idea of having no intense trail system but does advocate for hunting because more development limits hunting. The proximity to dwellings is already limited by state regulations, prohibiting hunting may overdo it. Mr. Campbell agreed there is more need of green space. Mr. Mattera agreed with Mr. Clement about hunting, to allow it.

Chair Koff questioned whether it was practical to not have trails. There could be one main trail connecting to Little River. It has been 4-5 years since it was logged. Chair Koff indicated it sounds like the Commission is in support of limited recreational use but not in support of wheels and has mixed opinions on hunting.

Mr. Short noted a site walk would be a good idea and agrees with Mr. Clement about hunting and suggestion about the main trail.

Mr. Quigley indicated a recommendation is to have volunteers work with closely and would agree with a site walk.

Mr. Campbell suggested making a general motion and working out the details later.

Mr. Campbell motioned to recommend in support of limited passive recreation with details to be determined after a site walk. Mr. Clement seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### Accept Baseline Report (required by NHDES)

Chair Koff noted this should be evaluated after the site walk. Ms. Murphy noted it would go more efficiently if one or two people could look over the documents and bring back to the next meeting. Mr. Clement recommended going out with the baseline document to verify its accuracy. Mr. Mattera recommended the same group working on the wording and revising should go out and compare it as part of a group.

Ms. Eberhardt indicated the document is connected to the easement and need to understand benefit to public. Would like to see more detail reflected by the baseline document.

Determine Appropriate Stewardship Fee (one-time or annual) - Tabled

Location of Access (bridge removed from plan at last meeting) - Tabled

The Commission decided a site walk will be conducted individually within the next two weeks, from the access point on Continental Drive. Chair Koff, Mr. Campbell and Mr. Guindon will attend the site walk individually and touch base with Mr. Quigley.

Mr. Quigley will send a file showing lot lines and separation.

#### 4. Discussion of COVID-related Budget Restrictions and Proposed Reduction

Ms. Murphy indicated that due to the unusual circumstances the Town Manager has asked all Boards and Committees to find a ten (10%) percent reduction in cost savings for FY2020. The Conservation Commission budget has funds to hire seasonal conservation land stewards and will propose a reduction of \$2,500 there.

Mr. Campbell motioned to cut \$2,500 from the seasonal conservation land steward portion of the Commission's budget for FY 2020. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Murphy will notify the Town Manager.

#### 5. Expenditure Request: NHACC Dues

Ms. Murphy provided a copy of the invoice dated October 1, 2019 for New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commission dues.

Chair Koff motioned to approve \$700 to pay the NHACC dues for FY 2020 from the Conservation Commission operating budget. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

#### 6. Committee Reports

##### a. Property Management

Ms. Murphy noted she originally intended to partner with Seacoast School of Technology to grow milkweeds and then had an opportunity with Mr. Brightman to partner with us and have \$1,000 worth of pollinator plans for the Morrissette property. The planting was done on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Each of three parts of the field have two planting areas and it is recommended to move one-third of the field each year. The next step

would be public outreach and registering this property and Whites Meadow (McDonnell parcel).

Mr. Koff recommended a TV spot with Mr. Glowacky at Exeter TV for public outreach.

i. Morrisette Property Pollinator Project, Monarch Waystation, Pollinator Pathways

Morrisette Property and Whites Meadow at McDonnell Property monarch waystation registration

Chair Koff motioned to approve \$32 for two registration fees of \$16 each for the monarch waystations from the Conservation Land Use Administration budget. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

ii. Expenditure Request: Conservation Landowner Outreach

Chair Koff motioned to approve \$37 to cover printing costs for the postcards that were sent out to landowners to be paid from the Conservation Land Administration budget. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

iii. Expenditure Request: Weed wrench

Ms. Murphy noted Carlos has been working tirelessly to pull invasives and recommends purchasing a weed wrench which will make the task go along much more easily.

Mr. Guindon noted the estimate ranged from \$159-\$192.

Mr. Campbell motioned to expend up to \$220 for purchase of a weed wrench from Conservation Land Administration budget. Mr. Short seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

iv. McDonnell Property Gate Operation Update

Ms. Murphy indicated the property has an easement and the owner has concerns with use. The number of police calls was significant. A gate was installed with room for walking on but limits parking. Reached out for help managing the gate, which is tough. Is open at 8 am and closed at sunset.

Mr. Clement noted he was disappointed it came to that and wished there was a better solution than gating the parking area. The property is good for fishing or launching kayaks.

b. Trails

i. Trail Work Updates and Supply Expenditure Requests: Various wooden trail signs, Industrial Dr. Kiosk, Irvine Property Sign

Mr. Campbell motioned to approve \$100 for wood and hardware for signs built by Jon Thurnberg and sign posts from the Conservation Land Administration budget. Ms. Short seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Industrial Drive Kiosk

Ms. Murphy noted the kiosk was developed in association with meeting place and looks different than a typical kiosk. A sign has been drafted for the kiosk. Ms. Murphy estimated \$130 for the kiosk.

Chair Koff motioned to approve \$130 for the kiosk from the Conservation Land Administration budget. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Irving Property Sign

Chair Koff indicated the sign was almost done. Ms. Murphy indicated as they were not looking to be reimbursed for the sign, a thank you could be sent to Everett Evans. Chair Koff recommended posting on Facebook.

Planks for Bridging

Mr. Short noted a lot was accomplished and the labor was donated. Will try to post to keep people off trails when there is a lot of wet weather.

c. Outreach Events

i. Spring Tree Program Update

Ms. Murphy noted seedlings have been ordered and are still committed to continuing the program, but it is delayed for now.

ii. Rain Barrel Program Open through May 25

Ms. Murphy noted the program is still in effect through May 25. Go to Rain Barrel Company and choose Exeter.

iii. Sky Watch Star Gazing Event Rescheduled for Friday 10/16 (10/23 backup date)

Chair Koff noted the event was rescheduled.

iv. Virtual Hike Programming Suggestion

The Commission agreed it would be a good idea to take the pressure off the Town Forest and share the existence of lesser known properties. Chair Koff noted he is planning something with Exeter TV and Parks & Recreation.

Mr. Glowacky from Exeter TV indicated he would not do filming with people yet but can go to the trails and film the way Raynes Farm was done; and see if a 360 degree view can be done so will look as if they're there.

Chair Koff recommended sending a list of some of the trails the Commission would like to highlight.

d. Tree City Subcommittee Report

Ms. Ward indicated the sub-committee met twice since the last report and is making good progress at Lincoln School. There is more maintenance needed. A good mechanism was found for watering trees. People can contribute funds and donate through Conservation and have them ear marked. The Spring Tree program was discussed and are ready to help. Need to apply annually for the Tree City designation.

The Lincoln School event is the first in what will become an annual Arbor Day event. To increase visibility the Tree City information will be posted on the Conservation Commission website.

The Chinese Elm tree was selected for Lincoln Street and is being done next Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. All necessary precautions are being taken.

7. Approval of Minutes: February 11, 2020

Chair Koff recommended edits to the header, to correct the spelling of Todd Piskovitz name.

Mr. Campbell motioned to approve the February 11, 2020 minutes, as amended. Chair Koff seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – abstain (absent) Guindon – abstain (absent) Campbell –abstain (absent) Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – abstain (absent). The motion passed 4-0-4.

8. Correspondence

Ms. Murphy indicated a letter was received relative to the shoreland permit application for the Nelson Drive property, which is a standard permit.

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled: 06-09-20, Submission Deadline: 05-29-20

11. Potential Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3(II)(d) for the consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property.

Chair Koff motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(d) consideration of the acquisition of real estate. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was closed to the public at 9:23 PM.

\_\_\_\_\_ motioned to come out of non-public session. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was reopened to the public at \_\_\_\_ PM.

\_\_\_\_\_ motioned to seal the minutes. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Chair Koff moved to adjourn at \_\_\_\_ PM. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Guindon – aye, Campbell – aye, Eberhardt – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer  
Recording Secretary