

Exeter Conservation Commission
July 14, 2020
Virtual Meeting
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight's meeting were by roll call, Chair Andrew Koff, Dave Short, Treasurer, Sally Ward, Clerk, Bill Campbell, Carlos Guindon, Alyson Eberhardt, Ginny Raub, Julie Gilman(Select Board Liaison) Nick Campion (Alternate), Donald Clement (Alternate) and Kristen Osterwood (Alternate) and Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner.

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

Absent: Vice-Chair Trevor Mattera, Lindsey White(Alternate)

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

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.

2. Public Comment

None.

Action Items

1. Committee Reports

a. Property Management

i. Managing Multi-Use Activities at Raynes Farm

Ms. Ward reported Stewardship met recently and indicated issues with multiple users there. Occasionally agriculture, recreation and wildlife conflict with each other. Mr. Clement noted when the property was obtained agriculture was to be the priority. Mr. Koff indicated the barn needs to be preserved as well. Ms. Gilman asked if there was a formal application for activities and a description of events.

Ms. Ward noted the first cut of the haying season occurs July 15th because there are birds on the property earlier in the season. The contract is through 2022. The farmer would like to do a second cut but it could conflict with recreational uses. The Stewardship Committee decided it would be best to meet with the farmer at the beginning of the season to communicate.

ii. Outdoor Events at Raynes Farm

Ms. Murphy noted Mr. Anderson had an event approved for August. Mr. Dean indicated Raynes Farm events should go to the Select Board. Ms. Gilman indicated the Health Officer has also been reviewing these applications and permits. Ms. Raub noted the events should eventually get to the Select Board as a simple awareness matter. The use contract is very specific. Ms. Gilman recommended having the form adopted. A lot of concerns would be addressed by the Health Officer.

Ms. Ward indicated Mr. Anderson was approved for a music event, pre-COVID and had new idea to have multiple events following state guidelines and signing waivers of liability.

Mr. Anderson indicated he wanted to do something safe. There is enough space to host up to 200 people but would keep closer to half that capacity. The dates are t/b/d. Masks would be worn and there would be reminder signage.

Mr. Campbell recommended Ms. Murphy and Ms. Ward meet with Mr. Dean and/or the Health Officer to review the application with them, look at next month then move forward.

MOTION: Ms. Ward motioned to approve in concept and send for review to sub group including appropriate authorization to return to Commission next meeting. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion.

Ms. Ward indicated the subcommittee would be herself, Kristen Murphy, Russell Dean and Health Officer.

Ms. Raub asked to clarify whether this event specifically fell under this motion or whether they were adopting protocol for any event and Mr. Koff indicated just for Mr. Anderson's proposal.

Mr. Clement recommended narrowing down to one event at a time.

VOTE: A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

b. Trails

i. Trail Passport Supplies – Expense Request \$160

Ms. Murphy indicated trail markers have been damaged and need replacement. The cost is \$160.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to approve \$160.00 for trail marker replacement. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

c. Outreach Events

i. Virtual Bird Walk at Raynes

Ms. Murphy reported the video is available on the website and Facebook. Bob Glowacky did a great job with it. There is a second video possible with turtle nestings.

ii. Pollinator Pathways partnership consideration

Ms. Murphy reported Pollinator Pathways had a workshop to discuss their program and she and Ginny attended. The goal is to encourage residents to convert even small portions of their property for pollinator habitat. Kingston initiated it and now and other conservation commissions have joined.

Mr. Clement asked if anyone could come and speak with us and Ms. Murphy indicated they were scheduled in February but . A resident who is a landscape designer reached out to Ms. Murphy to encourage families to go out on nature tours and have a virtual map for feeding stations for pollinators. Ms. Murphy just registered two properties as weigh stations.

7. Approval of Minutes: June 9, 2020

Edits were recommended to Pages 2, 4 and 5.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to accept the June 9, 2020 minutes as amended. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Raub – abstain, Gilman – abstain. Motion passed 5-0-2.

8. Correspondence

a. Gateway Project Update

Ms. Murphy reviewed the concerns raised in Pete Steckler's letter concerning the vernal pool, question of whether a bearded iris was found and a Swamp White Oak. Planning Board requested third-party review of the wetlands. Mr. Sharples is looking for a wetland scientist to conduct this. The Planning Board will meet again on July 23rd.

Mr. Guindon indicated he was certain he saw a Swamp White Oak out there and wondered who would make a final determination as to special status plant species.

Ms. Murphy noted the Commission provided recommendation on CUP already but the memo indicated they would like additional input should impacts increase because at that time the application had not been to the Technical Review Committee. The presence of a vernal pool would increase buffer impacts. Ms. Gilman noted UNH Extension had some expertise. Ms. Murphy recommended they not be specific on who to recommend but just indicate they recommend a qualified botanist. Mr. Campbell recommended the Commission be able to review the third-party report as it may change the Commission's view.

Mr. Koff recommended they minimize impacts to the vernal pool buffer.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to send a memo to Planning Board outlining the Commission's concerns. Mr. Short seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Short – aye, Ward – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Raub – aye, Gilman – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

b. Stone Leighton Mowing

Ms. Murphy noted a resident expressed concerns about the property not being mowed regularly for several years. Should have had a lease agreement with them. Have every intention to hay the field.

Ms. Raub asked if this was on Juniper Road and Ms. Murphy indicated it was.

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled: July 14, 2020, Submission Deadline: July 31, 2020

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn at 9:17 PM. Mr. Koff seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary