

TOWN OF FITZWILLIAM

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, July 19, 2021
7:00 PM

Members Present: Paul Kotila, Chairman; Kevin Woolley; Susan Silverman; Beth Vanney; and Terri Robbitts.

Members Absent: Hiel Lindquist; and Robyn Bates, Selectmen's Representative

Guests Present:

Chairman Paul Kotila called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

REVIEW OF DRAFT MINUTES: June 21, 2021.

Terri Robbitts motioned to approve the minutes of June 21, 2021 as written. Susan Silverman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 5 [Kotila; Woolley; Silverman; Vanney; Robbitts]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

NEW BUSINESS:

Wildlife Training Program: Mr. Kotila stated the program involved 6 online sessions, running from September to November, and a final project at the end. Ms. Silverman suggested one person from each Board attend and/or youth and high school students participate. Ms. Vanney was interested in participating, if others want to be involved. The LUC asked if work within the Katie Metzger Forest could be the endcap project. Other suggestions for possible endcap projects included Natural Resource Inventory and watershed programs. Mr. Kotila was unsure of the project scope but felt it is definitely a community project.

Field Naturalist Certificate Program: Ms. Vanney is interested in attending this program. The Commission was unaware of the program. However, Mr. Kotila stated that funding may be available.

UPDATES TO ON-GOING BUSINESS:

Budget: Mr. Woolley requested reimbursement of \$114.32 for supplies purchased to repair trails in Widow Gage. There was a broken tread on the boardwalk, which has been replaced. Alex Caster provided equipment and assistance.

Ms. Silverman motioned to reimburse Kevin Woolley in the amount of \$114.32. Ms. Vanney seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 5 [Kotila; Woolley; Silverman; Vanney; Robbitts]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

NHACC Conservation Commission Handbooks: Mr. Kotila relayed to the Commission that a revised version of the handbook has been released. It has been quite some time since an update has been done. He recommended that each Commission member receive one, plus two copies for the Land Use Office. Each copy is \$20.

Ms. Silverman motioned to approve the purchase of eight (8) Conservation Commission Handbooks. Ms. Robbitts seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 5 [Kotila; Woolley; Silverman; Vanney; Robbitts]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

Properties: The LUC provided updates on DES actions for non-compliant properties. The LUC also gave background/introduction on an upcoming case on Stone Pond. Also, the owners of 452 East Lake Road will submit demolition plans for both Conservation and Planning to review and approve. Mr. Kotila briefly explained the Stone Pond dam removal process stating the Connecticut River Conservancy is working to assist the land owner and they will keep the Town updated.

Chinook Solar Project: no update

Katie Metzger Forest: A work day has been scheduled for Monday, July 26 with Lew Shelley. An alternate rain day will be worked out between Mr. Shelley and Mr. Kotila.

Rail Trail project: Mr. Kotila stated that the Monadnock Conservancy has obtained funding to make the Rail Trail handicap accessible. It will be similar to the Sip Pond Trail. He was unsure of the timeline for when work may begin or end.

Ms. Vanney commented that there are deep ruts from ATVs by the gates. She suggested a reminder of no motorized vehicles on the Rail Trail, except snowmobiles, be put on Facebook. The LUC will ask if the Recreation Department can post a reminder.

Natural Resource Inventory update: The Commission received a proposal from Dr. Rick Van de Poll for the NRI update at the time of the meeting. They will review the proposal and send any feedback to Mr. Kotila for further discussion.

Monadnock Advisory: no update as Mr. Lindquist was not present.

Dog Waste Bags: no update as Mr. Lindquist was not present.

Invasive Species: Ms. Vanney stated that she took care of the bittersweet herself on the Rail Trail across from Collins Pond and south of Bishop Court. Work still needs to be done by the town pond dam. There is also an infestation inside the abandoned building.

Ms. Vanney relayed that in two weeks, purple loosestrife will start blooming. The pond across from the Town Hall is heavily infested and she will work to cut the blooms. Ms. Silverman suggested reaching out to the homeowners who live on the pond, as it is not town property. Ms. Robbitts felt there needs to be an educational program, perhaps posters at the library. Ms. Silverman suggested using a QR code to link people to state invasive resources. Mr. Kotila further suggested using UNH Extension, the State's Agriculture Department, as well as DES as resources. Ms. Vanney also suggested educating the highway department. The Commission agreed that the highway department now avoid invasive infestations to not cause it to spread more. Ms. Vanney will provide a ballpark figure for an educational campaign at the library, which may contain posters with photos of invasive species and how to get rid of them.

Ms. Silverman relayed that there is bittersweet growing heavily on the back side of the fire tower at the station.

Meadowood: no update.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Nolan
Land Use Coordinator

Minutes approved as written on August 16, 2021.