

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

November 1, 2017

Approved November 15, 2017

Regular Members: LeeAnn Wolff, Thomas Davies, Mark Post, Jonathan Bruneau, Tom Dufresne.
Alternate Members: Laura Bianco, Joe Connelly, Cheryl Quaine
Staff: Connie Cain

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by L. Wolff, who is chairing the meeting until T. Dufresne's arrival.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

Wild & Scenic River Study Committee – LeeAnn Wolff & Laura Bianco

L. Wolff and L. Bianco updated members on the last two meetings of the Committee. L. Wolff noted that there is a lot to catch up on, as the Committee is in the last year of the 3rd year of the study; both Hollis and Brookline representatives have been asked to review the Management Plan draft to date. The Committee would like to present the draft to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) soon, in time to get the plan to March 2018 Town Meeting if necessary. L. Wolff also stated that Drew Kellner of the Brookline CC, would like to attend the next meeting to update members on the process. There is no cost to the Town to participate, and does not mean much to the public except that it offers additional protection to the Nissitissit River.

T. Davies asked if the BOS have already given approval to participate, why is Town Meeting approval needed? L. Wolff isn't fully aware of the requirements, and will email the link to the draft after the meeting; D. Kellner is acting as the NH spokesperson, and should be able to answer at the next meeting. Additionally, Federal funding may be available to the Towns if designation is approved.

During the October 24th public meeting, L. Wolff was able to attend, and she felt the information provided was well received by the public. Recreational goals were reviewed, and she did not get the sense that there were any major concerns. The committee is in the act of scheduling additional meetings in the affected Towns, and she will keep the HCC updated. She also reminded members that the Nashua River is not part of this committee, the protection ends at the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border. T. Davies felt that it was great that the local Conservation Commissions in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts are able to work together towards a common goal, and hopes that this is the first of many collaborations.

L. Wolff stated that a Visual Resources Inventory will be done in conjunction with the National Parks Service. She will be participating in a 1-hour webinar on this inventory and attending a site walk along the river as well, which should provide an inventory of the visual assessments of value along the Nissitissit River.

T. Davies stated that he hoped that the public trail in Massachusetts could be bridged over the Nissitissit River to join with Beaver Brook Association's (BBA) "Jeff Smith Trail." L. Wolff and L. Bianco stated that this has been discussed, with the eye to connect the public trails in Massachusetts with BBA's. T. Davies stated that he was not sure who was funding the project, but that Peter Smith of BBA had been interested in the project for some time. L. Wolff stated that this had come up, and is specifically addressed in the management plan, as the public interest is very high for this project; L. Wolff will ask for further details on a potential bridge construction to line up the two trails. J. Bruneau asked if there was a deadline to complete the management plan; L. Wolff stated that it must be complete prior to the March 2018 Town Meeting.

There were no Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, or Treasurer's Report updates available at meeting time.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS

NHACC Annual Conference, November 4, 2017

T. Dufresne, L. Bianco and L. Wolff will be attending. The event is at the Pembroke Academy, starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, November 4, 2017, and registration at the door is open to any other members who have not registered yet.

Accounts Payable

Two bills have been submitted for payment, as follows:

- 1.) William H. Hall, for mowing on Merrill Lane, at the request of T. Dufresne, in the amount of \$95.00.
L. Wolff motioned to approved payment to Mr. Hall in the amount given; seconded by L. Bianco. All members approved, none opposed, and the motion to pay carried by a vote of 7-0-0.
- 2.) Nashua Telegraph, for posting of the Howe Conservation Easement public hearing, in the amount of \$36.80.

M. Post motioned to approved payment to the Nashua Telegraph in the amount given; seconded by L. Wolff. All members approved, none opposed, and the motion to pay carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Membership/Duties

J. Bruneau enquired about the work of the now-defunct Land Protection Study Committee (LPSC). He felt that Conservation members may need to "regroup" in regards to both a discussion of potential properties which are felt important to conserve and maintenance of HCC properties. After a lengthy discussion, it was felt prudent to invite Paul Edmunds to a HCC meeting to discuss what ongoing items there might be, along with other topics brought up.

MINUTES

L. Wolff motioned to approve the public minutes of the October 18, 2017 meeting as written; seconded by L. Bianco. All members were in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved 7-0-0.

L. Wolff motioned to approve the non-public minutes of the October 18, 2017 meeting as written and to keep the minutes sealed; seconded by T. Davies. All members were in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved and sealed 7-0-0.

(T. Dufresne arrived at 7:45 pm.)

Membership/Duties continued

T. Dufresne stated that P. Edmunds may not be able to attend until after the first of the year due to family commitments. He will contact him to determine a date, and schedule him to attend the next available meeting. T. Dufresne reminded members that regular membership is full, but openings for alternate members is available for those LPSC members who may wish to join the HCC.

2017 Annual Town Report

L. Wolff stated that at the next meeting, she will be bringing forward the HCC Report for the Annual Town Report. If members could think of things that had happened over the past year and report to her on that, she would appreciate it.

RECREATION COMMISSION UPDATE

T. Dufresne had been attending the Recreation Commission prior to his arrival. He stated that they have a rough estimate for the creation of two practice fields and associated parking lots, etc. which is about \$571,000. The parking location is in the corn fields to the south of the stone wall, and the practice fields will be placed in the forested areas. This will have some impact to the agricultural portion of the property to be leased. T. Dufresne also discussed the other site under consideration, and members seemed interested in the prospect.

After discussing the said property with the BOS, the BOS had requested that the HCC pay \$100,000 of the asking price; the Town will cover the remaining funds necessary for the purchase. The HCC will receive stewardship or ownership of the approximate 10 acres of wetlands on the property in exchange for the funds. Some discussion on this topic occurred.

T. Davies motioned to expend \$100,000 towards the acquisition of the property in question, on South Merrimack Road, to protect the 10 +/- acres of wetlands to the rear of the property, with the remaining 9 +/- acres to be used for Recreational purposes; with M. Post seconding. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 8-0-0.

T. Davies stated that some Conservation Commissions receive 100% of the Land Use Change Tax (LUCT); Hollis has approved a 50-50 split between the HCC and the General Fund. He felt that with the recent dismissal of the LPSC, and with the increase to property values over the years, it is difficult to come up with funding for these purchases. He would like the HCC to consider requesting that 100% LUCT be given to the HCC for maintenance and purchase of Conservation property. This would need to be a warrant article to be voted on at Town Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

T. Dufresne motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Cain

Staff