

**Hollis Conservation Commission
Minutes from the July 19, 2023 Meeting
Approved August 16, 2023**

Regular Members Present: Joseph Connelly, Thomas Davies, Mark Post, Tom Dufresne, Karen Bridgeo, Paul Edmunds, Peter Band.
Alternate Members Present: Laura Bianco, Bernadette McQuilkin, Paul Armstrong
BOS Liaison: David Petry
Staff Present: Connie Cain
Also Present: Bill Moseley, Planning Board Chair; Joe Garruba, Selectman

J. Connelly called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. J. Connelly appointed B. McQuilkin to vote in P. Edmunds absence, and L. Bianco to vote in T. Davies absence.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Planning Board - Bill Moseley

B. Mosley shared that the Planning Board (PB) saw 2 cases at their most recent meeting.

The first case was the convenience store across from The Hatch on Runnells Bridge Road. The applicants updated their landscaping per request of the PB and various safety requirements. The application was approved. The second case was a lot line adjustment between the owners of the Valicenti Pasta manufacturer in the center of town. They adjusted the lot lines from 3 lots to 2 lots.

(T. Davies arrived at 6:34 pm)

Board of Selectmen Update - D. Petry

D. Petry shared that after the beaver deceiver was installed on Hayden Reservoir, the water levels were quite low, and suggested that as new beaver deceivers go in, to coordinate with the DPW on the water levels etc.

Treasurer's Report

There was no treasurer's report at this meeting.

Law Property Workgroup - M. Post

M. Post shared that the workgroup was discussing the various future ideas for a contract for the continued maintenance of the property. P. Edmunds had suggested the possibility of a public hearing for total transparency.

T. Davies suggested that the board do nothing other than management and maintenance, as that is the job of the HCC. Discussion took place on the possible next steps regarding the maintenance or improvement of the property along with various forms of public input.

NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

Beaver Deceiver - J. Connelly

P. Armstrong shared that other beaver deceivers in town were done by different people, and we should consider alternatives. T. Dufresne noted that there is a stone culvert on Mill Pond, which could cause a problem if there is increased water flow. D. Petry suggested that the DPW replace that culvert for the next year.

K. Bridgeo shared that there was another beaver dam on Rocky Pond Road that the DPW was asking the HCC to install a deceiver for. Discussion took place on some of the various options for the problem at Rocky Pond Road.

J. Connelly shared that there was an emergency email thread between himself, the DPW, Craig Birch, and several others regarding Rocking Pond Road. Joan Cudworth, DPW Director, shared that the water was getting very high and close to the road and asked if the HCC could install a beaver deceiver as quickly as possible as to avoid flooding. J. Connelly asked if the HCC would support getting the work done next week.

Discussion took place on if a beaver deceiver was necessary in that area.

T. Dufresne motioned to approve payment of up to \$2100 to Tony Drago for installation of a beaver deceiver, seconded by T. Davies. J. Connelly polled members; all members in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion to pay carried by a vote of 6-0-0.

T. Dufresne and B. McQuilkin volunteered to contact the Town of Amherst Conservation Commission and the NH Department of Fish and Game to inquire about who they use to install beaver deceivers.

Hacker Property, Depot Road, Bridge Replace MBLU 010-034 - J. Connelly

P. Armstrong shared that he had spoken with the Fire Chief about the bridge and he shared that they had used the bridge multiple times to rescue people in the woods.

T. Dufresne suggested that it wasn't the HCC's job to maintain the bridge as it is used primarily by the fire department; that it hasn't caused any injuries yet, and the bridge itself has been there since there was a mill on that site. He noted that since the fire department is the one using it, that they should be the one to replace it in due time. He also suggested that they put a sign up that said "use at your own risk."

M. Post commented that the sign might not be wise, as it could create greater liability; after further discussion it was the consensus that the best course of action would be to do nothing at this time.

Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm Property, MBLU 046-051 - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that at the recent site walk that they had done, they determined that the gate should go about 1,000 feet in from the road on the west side of the existing trail, nudged in between a tree and a rock formation. Discussion took place on the possible locations for the gate. T. Dufresne will contact Amos White about having the gate installed.

J. Connelly and T. Dufresne also noted that the invasives along the stream on the south side of the property were too thick to have their normal contractor deal with them.

Law Property Maintenance Agreement MBLU 014-035 - M. Post

M. Post shared that they could host the series on the property.

(P. Band arrived at 6:50 pm)

M. Post shared that they took the original lease document and modified it so that there was no mention of a lease agreement, but that instead it was a maintenance agreement. The agreement is for 2 mowing seasons, expiring on October 31, 2024. The agreement states that Greg Miller will be paid \$1,000 for maintenance of the paths, that he will take the hay after the haying is done, and in the event that fertilizer is used on the fields, under the approval of the HCC and submission of receipts, that he will be reimbursed up to \$2,500.

M. Post noted that the Agricultural Commission reviewed the agreement and made small adjustments to grammar and typos.

(P. Edmunds arrived 6:52 pm)

P. Armstrong asked about the small trees surrounding the field and if Greg Miller could cut them down. P. Edmunds responded no, and that they could hire someone else to help them with that. Discussion took place on the coordination of haying and tree cutting. B. McQuilkin thought that the recent cutting for a public trail was very nice and asked if that could be included in the agreement.

J. Connelly motioned to expend up to \$1000 for trail mowing, and up to \$3000 for fertilizer on the Law property for the 2023 Growing Season, P. Edmunds seconded. All members in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion to pay carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Rock Property - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that there were several boundary markers missing surrounding the Rock property and that they were going to get a quote from Meridian and Craig Birch to reset the markers and blaze the boundary line.

J. Connelly also shared that he received a management plan from Jim Oehler for the Rock property along with a bill for \$845.00.

T. Davies motioned to expend \$845 to Jim Oehler for the creation of the management plan for the Rock properties; seconded by P. Band. All members in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion to pay carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Summer Seminar Series - B. McQuilkin

B. McQuilkin covered the date and time for the summer seminar on the Law property.

(J. Garruba arrived 7:40 pm)

B. McQuilkin also shared that she has been attending the Wild and Scenic meetings as the HCC Representative, and has been invited to attend a 3-day workshop on the Nashua River in September.

New Use for Existing Properties - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that he had been inundated with various requests to take some of the existing HCC land and create new uses for some of them. He shared that some town members had reached out to him about the possibilities of larger parking lots, moving the town horse arena to be on HCC land, and putting single track trails on Birch Hill. J. Connelly asked if there was a way to create public access to the Flints Brook fishing pond near the French Mill & Rideout Road intersection.

T. Dufresne noted that the property surrounding Flints Brook is owned privately and that there is no way for the HCC to create public access. Both T. Dufresne and J. Connelly commented that the owner had placed "no trespassing" signs up and that J. Connelly had asked him to place his contact information onto the signs.

Old Home Days Planning - B. McQuilkin

B. McQuilkin shared that for Old Home Days, that the seminar committee has gathered updated booklets on invasives and pollinators, along with having an old computer that can show the slide show on a continuous loop throughout the day. She also shared that the Silver Lake Homeowners Association had requested that their booth line up next to the HCC's booth.

Mowing on the Burton Property Behind the Transfer Station - P. Armstrong

P. Armstrong asked Bill Burton about the mowing of the land back of the transfer station. P. Armstrong shared that B. Burton had said that he mowed that meadow as much as he could, but that it is fairly wet, and as a result he suggested that they not mow it this season because it is so wet this year. He also shared that B. Burton did not have interest in mowing the field and that it would cost probably \$500 to have someone do it for them.

Meeting Time Change - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that the HCC meeting time is being changed from 7:00 PM to 6:30 PM.

MINUTES

J. Connelly motioned to accept the public meeting minutes of June 21, 2023 and the Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm site walk minutes of July 17, 2023 as written; and to accept the non-public minutes of June 21, 2023 and to keep the non-public minutes sealed until voted by the HCC to release, as written; seconded by M. Post. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

(B. Moseley & J. Garruba left the meeting at 7:54 pm.)

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

T. Davies motioned to enter into non-public session; seconded by B. McQuilkin. Members were polled, voting in favor of entering into Non-Public Session were J. Connelly, T. Davies, M. Post, T. Dufresne, K. Bridgeo, P. Band, P. Edmunds; no members opposed or abstaining. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0 and the HCC entered into Non-Public Session at 7:55 pm.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

J. Connelly motioned to conclude the Non-Public session and to keep the minutes sealed until voted by the HCC to release, seconded by T. Davies. Members were polled, voting in favor of concluding the Non-Public Session were J. Connelly, T. Davies, M. Post, T. Dufresne, K. Bridgeo, P. Edmunds, and P. Band; no members opposed or abstaining. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0 and the HCC concluded Non-Public Session at 8:25 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

M. Post motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by J. Connelly. All in favor, none opposed or abstained. Motion carried 7-0-0, and the meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amiee Le Doux

Recording Secretary