

Hollis Conservation Commission
Minutes of the October 18, 2023 Meeting
Approved November 15, 2023

Regular Members Present: Joseph Connelly, Paul Edmunds, Thomas Davies, Mark Post, Tom Dufresne, Karen Bridgeo, Peter Band
Alternate Members Present: Bernadette McQuilkin, Paul Armstrong
BOS Liaison: Tom Whalen
Staff: Connie Cain, Amiee Le Doux

J. Connelly called the meeting to order at 6:33PM.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Board of Selectmen - T. Whalen

No updates were available at this time.

Treasurer's Report - T. Davies

As of October 17, 2023, the HCC balance was \$832,560.30 including \$10,000 set aside for stewardship. T. Davies felt that a portion of the HCC available funds could be put into a short-term CD to earn additional interest. A short discussion took place on the various interest rates and the possibility of doing so. T. Davies volunteered to talk to Jacob Fitzgerald, Town Finance Director, on this subject.

Law Workgroup - M. Post

M. Post shared that they had talked about the public information session for people to share and learn more about the land.

Grant Workgroup - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that C. Cain had set up a link for information on the Grant Workgroup and that the minutes will go there once public.

C. Cain also reminded members that both workgroups need to officially release agendas and take minutes for their meetings. C. Cain will also ask to have the Law Workgroup linked on the HCC website.

NEW AND CONTINUING BUSINESS

HCC Alternates - J. Connelly

J. Connelly informed members that Laura Bianco had recently resigned her membership in the HCC. Members expressed their dismay with hearing this resignation and thanked L. Bianco for her work on the HCC over the years. With L. Bianco's resignation, there are 2 alternate member positions open. K. Bridgeo shared that she knew of someone who would be putting in an application soon. Discussion took place on how to appoint or invite people to join as an alternate.

Public Comment Review - J. Connelly

After the last HCC meeting, J. Connelly and B. McQuilkin had met with Lori Radke, Town Administrator, and David Petry, Selectboard Chair, to get feedback on both the proposed Silver Lake Grant Warrant Article and the Public Comments from the October 4, 2023 meeting. Mrs. Radke and Mr. Petry both recommended that any HCC conversation be tabled until the next meeting. This would give members time to think about their responses and review materials before formulating a plan of action regarding a specific case. J. Connelly agreed with their perspective.

B. McQuilkin felt that the HCC conversation shouldn't be tabled, as it might reflect poorly on the HCC. In some cases, there may not be time to table the discussion due to deadlines or time issues. She felt that the HCC should address items on a case-by-case basis instead of placing a specific policy restriction on the HCC about response time. Discussion took place on how to handle the public comment in the future along with further reflection on how the most recent public comment meeting went. It was determined that the HCC would be responding on a case-by-case basis moving forward.

T. Whalen advised that the responses should be well thought out and processed to make sure that the appeals from the public be dealt with appropriately with the proper perspective. He felt that emotion and reason ought to be taken into consideration when hearing the public's concerns about a particular issue.

K. Bridgeo commented that in relation to the HCC's response to the public, that at the recent NHACC meeting, the NHDES shared that they wanted to hear from the local Conservation Commissions frequently, as they were the "boots on the ground."

T. Whalen asked if the HCC had received a response from the letter sent after the last public comment and where the jurisdiction lies in regards to brook trout in the stream. J. Connelly responded that they hadn't received any responses. Discussion took place on who would have the jurisdiction to protect this properly.

Rock Farm - J. Connelly

J. Connelly confirmed that T. Dufresne will be meeting with the Rock Brothers on October 20, 2023 to introduce Kerry Rickrode to the Rock Brothers, and to discuss and clarify what the invasive treatment would be accomplishing on their land.

Rock Farm Boundary - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that Randy Haight from Meridian Land Services had recommended the iron pins for boundary marking rather than the granite monuments as the iron would be more effective at marking, less expensive, and sturdier if someone accidentally backed into it with equipment etc. T. Davies commented that they ought to have them paint the iron pins fluorescent colors.

J. Connelly motioned to revise the previous motion at the October 4, 2023 meeting to change the wording of "3 granite markers" to "3 iron pins with bright colors, based on the recommendation of Meridian Land Services"; seconded by T. Davies. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm Gate - P. Armstrong

P. Armstrong shared that the gate was installed. He stated that they didn't leave enough links to hook the chain and padlocks to do so. T. Dufresne has been in touch with Amos White to see if he can get back out to fix that.

Nashua River Trail- T. Dufresne

T. Dufresne shared that the tree had been taken care of by Scott Pettingill the next day. There was no fee associated with this removal.

Forest View Drive Cul-de-Sac Tree Removal - P. Armstrong

P. Armstrong shared that he had contacted Brandon Rackliff to deal with the three trees that had fallen on Forest View Drive around the cul-de-sac. Brandon Rackliff quoted \$600 for the tree removal.

P. Edmunds motioned to approve payment, in the amount of \$700, to Brandon Rackliff to remove the 3 trees in the Forest View Drive cul-de-sac; seconded by M. Post. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Rocky Pond Road Tree Removal - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that Granite Mountain Tree Care, Brandon Rackliff, removed a tree on Rocky Pond Road that was hanging and was removed, for \$250.

J. Connelly motioned to approve payment of \$250.00 for the tree removal on Rocky Pond Road as discussed, seconded by P. Edmunds. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Beaver Deceiver - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that the beaver deceiver was not installed correctly on Rocky Pond, and as a result, Craig Birch came out to extend the exit pipe, as it wasn't long enough to drain the beaver deceiver properly. He also noted that Joan Cudworth, DPW Director, had donated the pipe; the HCC is responsible for labor and any extra materials. J. Connelly also commented that he would be more careful in the future about writing clauses into the contracts that ensure that this doesn't happen again. T. Dufresne shared that he had been to see the pipe and that it was fixed properly.

J. Connelly motioned to approve payment of \$150 to Southern New Hampshire Wildlife Control for materials to install additional exit pipe; seconded by T. Davies. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Invasive Treatment for Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that the invasive treatments have been completed on the Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm by Eric Radlof of Full Circle Forestry, and that the bill was \$1,250. T. Dufresne shared that for next year, if Fish & Game had expendable money, that they would go out and do an additional treatment. Discussion took place on how they would treat and when they would treat the invasives for next year. If approved, the treatment would take place in Summer 2024.

T. Dufresne noted that Paul mentioned that each HCC member should be responsible to track different properties; it shouldn't be left to one person to be in charge of all properties. Management items will begin to fall through the cracks, and not be completed.

P. Edmunds motioned to approve payment of \$1250 to Full Circle Forestry, Eric Radlof, for the final 2023 invasive species herbicide application; seconded by M. Post. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Flower Bulbs for the Elementary School - J. Connelly

J. Connelly shared that it cost \$883 for the flower bulbs for the elementary school planting project and that the teachers were very excited to be planting these with the elementary schoolers again this year. This expenditure was previously approved on September 6, 2023.

Seminar Series - B. McQuilkin

K. Bridgeo shared that she had been having a problem with getting the invites up on Facebook and that she would continue to work on that. B. McQuilkin shared that there were around 30 people who signed up for the seminar both online and in person. She also shared that T. Whalen will be coming and further invited the HCC to join. Discussion took place on further educational opportunities.

Silver Lake Grant Warrant Article - B. McQuilkin

B. McQuilkin shared that after discussing the grant warrant article with David Petry and Lori Radke, the Selectboard has been keeping track of this warrant article. She shared that she would be speaking briefly in front of the Budget Committee and BOS with updated information regarding the grant warrant article. Steve Landry would also be there from NHDES to present further information on the grant.

J. Connelly shared that D. Petry had clarified that the BOS would be presenting the warrant article at the town meeting if it was approved. He also shared that the warrant article needs to be ready by January 1, 2024. Discussion took place on if they should vote for approval on the draft warrant article.

P. Band motioned to wholeheartedly approve the draft Warrant Article, as approved by Town Counsel, for the Silver Lake Grant Application, and to recommend approval of the same to both the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee; seconded by K. Bridgeo. All in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Wild and Scenic River Council - B. McQuilkin

B. McQuilkin shared that there is a workshop that will be held at the Nashua River Watershed Association office on December 15, 2023 for Conservation Commissions to work together on the Nissitissit River.

MINUTES

T. Davies motioned to accept the public meeting minutes of October 4, 2023, 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.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

J. Connelly motioned to enter into non-public session; seconded by M. Post. Members were polled, voting in favor of entering into Non-Public Session were J. Connelly, P. Edmunds, T. Davies, M. Post, T. Dufresne, K. Bridgeo, and P. Band; none opposed or abstained. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0, and the HCC entered into Non-Public Session at 8:01 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, P. Edmunds, T. Davies, M. Post, T. Dufresne, K. Bridgeo, and P. Band; none opposed or abstained. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0, and the HCC concluded Non-Public Session at 8:07 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

K. Bridgeo motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by J. Connelly. All in favor, none opposed or abstained; the motion was carried by a vote of 7-0-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amiee Le Doux
Recording Secretary