

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

October 18, 2017

Approved November 1, 2017

Regular Members: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, David Connor, LeeAnn Wolff, Mark Post.
Alternate Members: Mary Jeffery, Laura Bianco, Joe Connelly.
BOS Ex-Officio: Peter Band
Staff: Connie Cain

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS

New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) Annual Dues

T. Dufresne has received the NHACC 2018 Dues statement in the amount of \$415.00. T. Dufresne motioned to approve payment of said dues; seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed, and motion to pay NHACC Annual Dues in the amount of \$415.00 carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

(L. Bianco arrived at 7:10 pm.)

Mary Jeffery, Resignation

T. Dufresne announced that M. Jeffery has tendered her resignation from the HCC, and that tonight is her last meeting. He wanted to thank her for her dedication and service to the HCC, with the rest of the HCC membership expressing the same. M. Jeffery said she would like to rejoin once her schedule allows her to make the commitment; members assured her that she would always be welcome.

Pitarys Homes, Twiss Ln & Lynne Dr, MBLU 004-061

StoneHill Environmental has been hired to conduct the Phase I Environmental Study on the property; costs will be approximately \$2700. T. Dufresne has also spoken to Meridian Land Services to create a boundary survey of the property. As Meridian has already surveyed two of the boundaries, this should assist in creating the survey and also keep costs down. T. Davies asked what the Town would do if any hazardous waste was found during the study; P. Band stated that the Town would decline the donation. T. Dufresne elaborated, stating that it would depend on what was discovered, but the Town would probably decline and ask that the property owner take steps to address and correct any deficiencies. The Phase I Study is conducted to protect the Town from any unknown liabilities, such as hazardous waste, and this is why it is a requirement prior to any Town purchase/donation of land.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

T. Dufresne motioned to enter into non-public session to discuss a potential land acquisition under RSA 91-A:3, II (d); seconded by L. Wolff. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 8-0-0. The HCC entered Non-Public session at 7:12 pm.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

T. Dufresne motioned to return to public session and to keep the minutes sealed under RSA 91-A:3, III; seconded by J. Connelly. All members in favor, none opposed. The motion to return to public session carried 8-0-0, and the minutes were sealed. The HCC returned to public session at 7:25 pm.

T. Dufresne motioned to approve expenditure of funds for a Phase I Environmental Study for the property discussed in non-public session, the cost is estimated at \$2700; seconded by L. Wolff. All members in favor, none opposed, and motion carried by a vote of 8-0-0.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS *continued*

Howe Conservation Easement, Ranger Road, MBLU 026-026 & 026-080

T. Dufresne announced that the Howe Conservation Easement ALE deed has been approved by NRCS, and has now come back to the HCC to approve the expenditure of \$100,000, as previously agreed. Due to the expenditure amount, State Law requires that a Public Hearing on the expenditure take place before the HCC and the Board of Selectmen can formally approve the funds being released. M. Post asked what the current balance in the HCC funds are; T. Davies stated that \$437,136.60 is currently available.

T. Dufresne motioned to approve expenditure of HCC funds in the amount of \$100,000 towards the Howe Conservation Easement purchase; seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 8-0-0.

After some discussion of legal public notices and timing, the Public Hearing will be scheduled on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 as part of the regular HCC meeting, and will be the first item on the agenda for that meeting. C. Cain will work with Town Administrator to ensure that the meeting notices are published as required.

Town-Community Forest Survey, UNH Coop

T. Dufresne has received a request to submit information for a town/community forest (town-owned forested land 10+ acres) survey that UNH Cooperative Extension is working on in conjunction with the NH Association of Conservation Commissions and the Northern Forest Center. He asked for volunteers for the project; L. Wolff and D. Connor stated they would jointly work on the project. C. Cain will send them the list of the Town properties with information necessary to complete the task.

NHACC Annual Conference, November 4, 2017

T. Dufresne stated that registration is still open for the conference, and you may register online. Car-pooling and other information will be discussed at the November 1, 2017 meeting.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

Board of Selectmen – Peter Band

At the October 16, 2017 BOS Public Meeting, the BOS announced that they have discharged/dissolved the Land Protection Study Committee (LPSC). P. Band stated it was felt that the LPSC had fulfilled its mission, and that it was time for the Committee to cease functions; this was strictly a management decision. The duties performed by the LPSC have now been transferred to the HCC, which include identifying and potentially purchasing lands which demonstrate a public benefit. P. Band stated that the BOS holds the HCC in high regard, and that the BOS felt the HCC is worthy of this task. HCC membership may need to increase to handle additional tasks. P. Band stated that the BOS and the public also hold T. Dufresne in high regard and respect, and his reputation in Town speaks to this. P. Band felt that this is a good move for the Town overall.

Discussion ensued over this announcement. M. Jeffery stated that easement and land purchases can contain differing mechanisms to obtain property, and these can seem daunting at times. P. Band felt that details and mechanics of these items will evolve over time. T. Dufresne agreed, and stated that all members will need to step up to the plate, but if too overwhelming, members will need to speak up. D. Connor asked how conflicts in determining conservation and other values would be addressed; he felt that may come up in the future. This led to a short discussion of the mission statements of both groups; although somewhat the same, there are differences in why land purchases were pursued and the LPSC did not have the legal restrictions that the HCC does. T. Davies asked if the BOS felt that enough land in Town has been purchased, or was there another reason for the dissolving of the LPSC. P. Band stated that it was a management decision solely; the BOS are very aware of T. Dufresne's concerns with the HCC taking these responsibilities on. T. Davies stated that many of the LPSC members had long-standing connections to land owners and their connections facilitated discussions in order to meet the goals of preserving the rural character of Hollis. L. Bianco asked if LPSC members would be able to join the HCC; HCC membership is open to any LPSC member who wishes to join, and it is hoped that some will.

D. Connor felt that there should be a list of criteria created to avoid confusion in determining conservation values for future purchases, and also for determining funding sources. T. Dufresne stated that per the Town Attorney William Drescher, HCC funds have specific legal restrictions when used to acquire properties. There is a question of whether or not agricultural properties, which can be considered conservation property, qualify under the RSA. T. Dufresne would like a group of 3-4 members to meet with Atty. Drescher to discuss and clarify these laws, and asked members to inform him if they were interested in attending.

Treasurer's Report – Thomas Davies

As of October 9, 2017, the HCC fund balance was \$447,136.60. Accounting for \$10,000 in reserve, this leaves \$437,136.60 available as cash.

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

Both ladies attended the "Paddle on the Nashua River," and felt it was very insightful and informative. They both felt it provided a different perspective of the river system, and how the Wild & Scenic River designation will help protect the waterways. L. Bianco highly recommended that members take the same trip if they can. The next meeting for the

121 Committee will be on Thursday, October 19, 2017 and the public input meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24,
122 2017 at 7:00 pm at the Nashua River Watershed Association's offices at 592 Main St, Groton MA.

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124 There was no Planning Board update in the absence of Cathy Hoffman.

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126 **MINUTES**

127 T. Dufresne motioned to approve the public minutes of the October 4, 2017 meeting as written; seconded by M. Post.
128 All members were in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved 8-0-0.

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130 T. Dufresne motioned to approve the non-public minutes of the October 4, 2017 meeting as written and to keep the
131 minutes sealed; seconded by L. Wolff. All members were in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved and
132 sealed 8-0-0.

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134 **ADJOURNMENT**

135 T. Dufresne motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed and the
136 meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm.

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138 Respectfully submitted,

139
140 Connie Cain
141 Staff