

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

April 18, 2018

Approved May 16, 2018

Members Present: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, LeeAnn Wolff, Cathy Hoffman, Mark Post, Jonathan Bruneau;
Alternate Members: Laura Bianco, Cheryl Quaine, Karen Bridgeo;
Board of Selectmen: Peter Band, BOS Liaison;
Staff: Connie Cain

T. Dufresne called the meeting to order at 7:00.

2018 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

T. Dufresne opened the floor up for nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. He noted that in order to be nominated, you must be a Regular member. The term of office for all positions is April 1st through March 31st.

Tom Dufresne was nominated for Chair; he accepted the nomination.
LeeAnn Wolff was nominated for Vice Chair; she accepted the nomination.
Thomas Davies was nominated for Treasurer; he accepted the nomination.
Jonathan Bruneau was nominated for Secretary; he accepted the nomination.

T. Dufresne asked for any additional nominations. With none forthcoming, he motioned to appoint those members nominated to the positions named; seconded by C. Hoffman. All members in favor, none opposed, and none abstained. The motion carried and the members named were voted to the positions listed by a vote of 9-0-0. C. Cain will inform Chrissy Herrera, Asst. Town Administrator.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – Peter Band

P. Band stated that the Selectmen have discussed the Howe Conservation Easement, from a legal perspective, with Town Attorney William Drescher. Any Town funds previously set aside for the purchase must be returned to the General Fund, and the process will have to start over should the Town wish to pursue. Evidence will need to be presented to the Selectmen and to the Townspeople in order to reconsider the purchase. T. Davies asked what the cost would be to the Town if the Selectmen decide to bring to Town Meeting again; P. Band stated that the cost should not change provided that NRCS Grant money is approved. There may be an additional \$10,000 in legal expenses, and the same funds would be asked for from the Town and the HCC; \$200,000 to \$220,000 from the Town's General Fund, and \$100,000 from the HCC. These amounts are based on the properties qualifying for a \$300,000 matching grant again. T. Davies asked if the Town's funds could come from the unexpended fund account; P. Band said it could, it would all depend on the Warrant Article wording. T. Davies noted that originally, pursuit of the Conservation Easement was by the now defunct Land Protection Study Committee, and he felt it was important to maintain the same relationship those members had with Sharon Howe. T. Dufresne noted that Paul Edmunds had spoken with Ms. Howe and she is willing to wait to see if the Town will reconsider the Conservation Easement in 2019.

WILD & SCENIC RIVER STUDY COMMITTEE – LeeAnn Wolff & Laura Bianco

The next meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2018 in Groton, MA. L. Bianco will be in attendance.

A motion was made by T. Davies, seconded by J. Bruneau to cancel the May 2, 2018 meeting. Members were not in favor of cancelling the meeting, and the motion failed by a vote of 0-9-0.

L. Wolff was hoping to invite Adam Jacobs to the May 2, 2018 meeting to present further information he had been able to glean from different local organizations in regards to the heritage tree program he presented at the April 4, 2018 meeting.

PLANNING BOARD – Cathy Hoffman

The last PB meeting was held on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. Prior to the meeting, there was a site walk at 3 Winterberry Way, off of Ranger Rd for a farm stand application.

The following items were brought before the PB:

- 1.) Application for a farm stand on Winterberry Way for the purpose of selling lavender and honey grown on the property by the owners, with the farm stand to be open on 4 different weekends during the year. The applicants has originally proposed classes and open houses in addition to the farm stand throughout the year. A provision for 10 parking spaces was also made, which was reduced from the originally proposed 20+ parking spaces. The abutters are not in favor of allowing the farm stand; the "road" is a private driveway providing access to 4 house sites. There is no maintenance agreement in place, and the abutters are concerned that increased traffic will disturb the private driveway, and have stated they will not agree to a maintenance agreement. This was tabled until the next meeting.
- 2.) Lovering Design Review for Subdivision. The Lovering's have proposed a 6-lot subdivision plan for their property on Pine Hill Road, the subdivision includes 1 lot with the existing house and 5 new house lots. C. Hoffman stated that the plan was missing a lot of information and the lot numbers are incorrect. A site walk has been scheduled for 5:00 pm prior to the PB's May 15, 2018 meeting. The lots are shown as 3 front lots and 3 rear lots. At this time, it is unknown how the Rural Character Ordinance will be impacted, and the engineer will be asking for a waiver of the HOSPD requirements.
- 3.) Master Plan Update. The PB has been working with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) on the Master Plan update for sections regarding Transportation and Future Land Use. C. Hoffman would like to get the drafts to the HCC for input. P. Band felt any updates to the Energy section should also be included.

HCC-AG WORKGROUP SUBCOMMITTEE – Mark Post

The Workgroup met with the Board of Selectmen, and gave the Selectmen the draft RFP and lease documents for Stefanowicz Farm. Any further action will be at the Selectmen's discretion.

T. Dufresne stated that he had received a complaint about vehicles being driven over the farm, M. Post will speak to one of the current lessees, who is tapping maple trees near the forested area. C. Quaine noted that a number of unidentified deer stands have been located on the property, in violation of State Law.

TREASURERS REPORT – Thomas Davies

As of April 13, 2018, there was \$539,816.60 in the HCC's account. Accounting for the \$10,000 in Stewardship reserve, this gives an available cash balance of \$529,816.60.

NEW & OTHER BUSINESS

Land Conservation & Water Fund Program

T. Dufresne received a letter from the agency for properties that had received Federal Funds towards the purchase of the properties. The letter contained identifiers for the properties which did not mean much to the HCC. T. Dufresne stated that the Rideout Flints Brook properties were included, but no way to identify specific properties. The LCWF requires that 5-year monitoring be done, this was last done in 2015. T. Dufresne is not sure if this is a letter stating that they will coming out shortly or if this is a reminder that they will be out in 2020. An identifiable property list is also needed, T. Dufresne will contact.

HCC Property Summer Hikes

L. Wolff had previously proposed conducting hikes on some of the HCC properties, to better inform the public and to show how the HCC manages its properties. T. Dufresne hesitant to say number of hikes to take place, and suggested that those properties which a management plan has already been created for be the focus. L. Bianco and L. Wolff would like to do evening or weekend hikes, with some historical information as well as the management plans being utilized for a hand-out. L. Wolff will assist with editing if someone volunteers for a specific property, and contact the local newspapers to have placed in their events calendar. She suggested 1 per month, June, July and August. Members should be prepared to discuss at the May 2, 2018 meeting.

(L. Wolff left the meeting at approximately 7:55 pm.)

Announcements

The Hillsborough County Conservation Commission is holding a "Wildlife for Farmland" discussion at Alpine Grove on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Cost for attendance is \$20.00, and registrations must be received by May 4, 2018.

T. Dufresne motioned to reimburse attendees to the event; seconded by T. Davies. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 8-0-0. Any member who attends the event should submit their receipt for payment to either T. Dufresne or C. Cain for reimbursement.

T. Dufresne stated that, to date, \$1774.50 has been paid to the Town's General Fund as profit from the timber harvest ongoing at the HCC properties across from the Transfer Station. Craig Birch is in charge of the timber harvest.

T. Dufresne reminded members of the upcoming site walk on a property which the HCC is considering for purchase. The site walk is to take place on May 12, 2018, at 1:00 pm at the property location. Evaluation sheets will be available for members attending.

ANNUAL ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP

Participants will enroll at the HCC booth to be set-up at the Transfer Station on May 5, 2018. T. Davies has spoken to Joan Cudworth about the event, and she had been notified by the State that participants should be made aware that fentanyl or other illegal substances may be discarded along streets. Participants are urged to wear rubber gloves, and call the police if any suspicious material is encountered. All members agreed, and will inform participants of this hazard.

Volunteers for the booth will be needed, and the rotation list will be available at the May 2, 2018 HCC Meeting. Joan Cudworth will have a sign, and maps will be needed for road assignments. C. Cain will print maps; T. Dufresne will bring tent and set-up in the morning. T. Dufresne and his brother John will work on South Merrimack Road due to potential road issues.

T. Dufresne asked members if they would like to have him procure a new tent prior to the event; the old one is barely holding on. Tents are not cheap, and C. Cain had done some preliminary research on the costs, which is approximately \$750. J. Bruneau motioned to allow T. Dufresne to expend up to \$850.00 for the purchase of a new tent; C. Hoffman seconded. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 8-0-0.

C. Quaine has contacted the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the HBMS Green Group, and the Honor Society about participating. J. Cudworth has also expressed interest in having the area behind the public area at the Transfer Station picked up. Generally, groups with children have been assigned to work on off the street areas, such as the HBHS, Nichols Fields, etc. This would also be another area for younger participants to focus on. C. Cain will be sending notice out to the email group once she has a clean version of the slide.

BIRCH HILL PROPERTIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

T. Dufresne spoken to Jim Oehler in regards to creating a management plan for the Birch Hill properties recently acquired by the Town, totaling approximately 354 acres. Once the plan is finalized and received, the HCC can begin the process of creating a Conservation Easement for the properties. The management plan creation is being created first so that any potential future uses can be accommodated. J. Bruneau asked if present restrictions on Town properties could be changed. T. Dufresne stated that they could potentially be changed, but may have other implications. T. Davies stated that in regards to possible new recreation fields, the Town should contact the State again in regards to leasing the part of the State Park north of the parking lot, this has been discussed in the past.

M. Post motioned to accept the cost estimate from Jim Oehler for the Birch Hill management plan, given as \$4320.00, and to expend funds in the same amount for the creation of the said plan; seconded by T. Dufresne. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 8-0-0.

MINUTES

T. Dufresne motioned to accept the public minutes of the April 4, 2018 meeting as written; seconded by J. Bruneau. All members in favor, none opposed; the minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

T. Dufresne motioned to accept the non-public minutes of the April 4, 2018 meeting as written, and to keep them sealed until such time they are voted to be released to the public; seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed; the non-public minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0-0, and will remain sealed until a future vote.

ADJOURNMENT

M. Post made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Cain
Staff