



Town of Weare Conservation Commission

15 Flanders Memorial Road

Weare, NH 03281

Fax: (603) 529-4554

Email: conservation@weare.nh.gov

Website: www.weare.nh.gov

Conservation Commission

Andrew Fulton, Chairman
Stephen Najjar, Vice Chair
Jeff Jackson
Lisa Grolljahn
William Bolton

CONSERVATION COMMISSION – October 14, 2015 draft MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM by Chairman Fulton.

Members present: Andy Fulton, Steve Najjar, Jeff Jackson, and Lisa Grolljahn

Guests: Jeremy Turner, Dave Ward, Gina and Tom Green

1. Eastman Conservation Area Town Forest – Gina and Tom Green addressed the commission to express concern for the condition of their driveway that crosses a portion of the town forest by right of way. The driveway has been used for timber extraction most recently during the reclamation of the meadow and they attribute divots and rutting to the big rig traffic. They are concerned that if not fixed before winter, it will make plowing more difficult and less effective. Chairman Andy Fulton noted that he had recently driven into the log landing and observed that though easily passable, the driveway portion did have some potholes and light rutting. Commissioners discussed the situation and asked Town Forester Jeremy Turner (MTL) whether it was common to do some upkeep after completion of forestry work. With no further use of the log landing anticipated in the near future, Mr. Turner agreed that some maintenance would be in keeping with industry norms. Several options and potentially interested vendors for the maintenance work were discussed. Vice Chair Steve Najjar **motioned** and Commissioner Grolljahn seconded the motion to approve expenditure of up to \$1,000 from the Town Forest Account annual maintenance allowance for Mr. Turner to arrange and execute the fix by competitive quote for driveway maintenance services. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Mr. Turner is to coordinate the work with the Greens.

Mr. Najjar spoke to address comments regarding trail work proposals at last meeting. He reiterated his concern that the trails initiative needs planning, coordination, and guidance similar in scope, quality, and accountability to the forestry services offered by our town forester. He related his surprise that the late summer trail walk at the ECATF was led by someone not retained by the commission on behalf of the Trails Subcommittee, while the one retained (while present) remained in the background. Trails Committee Chairman Dave Ward agreed that the walk leadership was a bit disjointed because Mike Lambert took a larger role than anticipated, acting like the contract holder, running ahead of us (figuratively and literally), and also putting down a bit of trail treading material without consultation. Mr. Najjar opined that for many reasons we should closely coordinate trail work on town forests with Mr. Turner. Mr. Turner suggested that SPNHF has a lot of experience and would be a good example of an organization that undertakes trail planning and incorporation of recreation into multi-use forestry parcels. Mr. Ward commented that Peter DeSantis was brought on as a trail developer, not as a comprehensive planner or property manager. His focus and expertise is with recreational land use. Mr. Najjar suggested that the Commission employ Mr. Turner to help develop a work scope that could then be used to solicit request for proposals (RFPs) for professional recreation planning services. Mr. Turner was receptive to the idea with the understanding that the Commission and Trails Committee would have to provide the vision for how the town would utilize its 3,000 acres of Town Forest. Discussion continued regarding undertaking some form of user analysis, capturing the range of interests of townsfolk in the forests, integrating recreation with forestry, setting priorities for particular forests, and potentially accessing grant funding.

Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Commissioner Jeff Jackson seconded the motion to retain Mr. Turner's services out of annual forest maintenance hourly funds (within budget limitations of the 2015 forestry

services warrant article) for the development of a work scope and budget estimate RFP to go out to bid, with a list of potential contractors for town forest and conservation land trails and recreation master planning services. Mr. Fulton called the motion, all voted in favor, and the motion passed. Mr. Najjar initiated discussion regarding laundry list items for Mr. Turner to incorporate into the RFP for professional consideration. Items brought up included employing a GIS foundation, inventory of existing trails on town lands, a kick-off meeting to solicit public interest (outreach), 5-yr project scoping with budgets, trail maintenance provisions, integration of recreational opportunity with forestry and other components – wildlife and natural resources, references, work products, and user assessments and feedback. Mr. Najjar mentioned that we should also be sure to address our conservation partners such as the Weare Historical Society and the Piscataquog Land Conservancy (PLC).

2. Mr. Turner presented his quarterly town forester's report to the Commission.
 - a. Toby Hill – paint blazes next summer, management plan in motion with draft plan about 6 months out
 - b. Eastman north – harvesting underway (removals via Hopkinton side) on plateau on side of Rattlesnake Hill, heavily cut ~50 years ago, good oak and rough shape pine, ~1 acre early successional gap disturbance, lot of low quality removal, income generating (stumpage in November)
 - c. Chevy Hill – layout set and ready to go, bid solicitation, met with Tim Redmond re. road conditions and landing/driveway modifications, access logistics are somewhat complicated, JT to attempt to contact 7 residents on access road to address potential concerns within neighborhood, CC affirmed interest in potentially hosting winter harvest tour
 - d. Eastman field maintenance – work needs to be done to keep reclaimed field open, mowing or burning but either way still have to deal with stumps
 - e. Jewett lots harvest awaiting access agreement with absentee landowner – Ms. Grolljahn to assist
 - f. Mr. Jackson to email Town Administrator Naomi Bolton about Brookshire encroachments and completing the legal work on the issue, follow up on MTL boundary work and surveyor letters, LLA no option
 - g. Joshua McGraw of MTL presented a potential pollinator project for the field - establishing and maintaining native wildflowers, weeds would have to be eradicated by herbicide (glyphosate/Roundup) or black plastic (\$100 for 20'x100'), some cultivation required, goal is to inoculate top inch of soil before seeding to allow flowers to start without undue competition, Amy (agriculture specialist) of Cooperative Extension Services developed options for us to consider after a field meeting with the county forester and Mr. McGraw, Commissioner Grolljahn expressed reservations with herbicide approach, CC agreed concept warranted further consideration this winter and Mr. Turner to re-address with a work scope when he joins us for the January 2016 town forester's report. Mr. Turner's work on this proposal is to be funded by the \$20K annual forestry maintenance services article (Town Forest Account) as hourly work per the 2015 Forestry Services Agreement (FSA).
3. Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Mr. Jackson seconded the motion to approve the draft May, June, July, and September 2015 minutes as final. All (but for Ms. Grolljahn who had to leave early) voted in favor and the motion passed.
4. Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Mr. Jackson seconded the motion to forward a flatline annual budget proposal for 2016 to Finance Administrator Beth Ruse. All voted in favor and the motion passed.
5. Mr. Najjar inquired whether DES Wetlands Bureau had looked into concerns about the Duck Pond outlet manipulation by DOT. Mr. Fulton had made no progress and is to try again to forward the concern to the Wetlands Bureau.

6. The Commission discussed Collins Ledge monitoring for SPNHF. John Ciampi had formerly conducted the monitoring. While Mr. Najjar monitors the Alex Property and former CC chair Tom Carr typically monitors the Kingsbury parcel, a monitor for Collins Ledge has yet to be identified. The oversight remains unresolved.
7. Mr. Najjar **motioned** and Mr. Jackson seconded the motion to approve Glenn DuBois' annual Wood Family Forest trapping request and to authorize Mr. Fulton to sign his trapping permit and access authorization on behalf of the Commission. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Jackson **motioned** and Mr. Najjar seconded, all voted in favor, and meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Fulton (WCC Chair)