

**Town of Bristol
Conservation Commission
September 21, 2016
Meeting Minutes**

Call to order: 7:00 PM

Members Present: Janet Cote, Sandra Heaney, and Richard Batchelder.

Minutes Review and Approval: Sandra Heaney moved to approve the August 3, 2016 minutes, seconded Richard Batchelder. The Commission voted to approve the minutes by a 3-0 vote.

Correspondence Review: Info Requests, Wetlands Permits, Planning Board, Zoning Board, etc.

A letter was received from the NH Association of Conservation Commissions requesting DES to grant an extension of the statutory deadline to the SEC in regards to the permit applications submitted for Northern Pass. The extension would allow local conservation commissions to provide more relevant information and feedback to DES.

A letter was received from the Society for the protection of NH Forests informing the Conservation Commission that it is time to monitor the Catterall easement by December 31, 2016. Sandra Heaney will complete this task.

A letter was received from Boyd Smith regarding the citizen planning initiative. The initiative was finished up and information is available on the NLRA web site.

The Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee is holding a meeting on September 27, 2016 at the Holderness town hall.

The NH Association of Conservation Commissions annual meeting is November 12, 2106.

Sandra Heaney sent an email with notes from her visit. Ms. Heaney reports that the existing wall is crumbling and in dire need of repair. There is an existing dock in the middle of the property- the other structure questioned is a staircase leading down for the right-of-way outside the property boundary. They would like to add a set of stairs at the lowest point of their frontage next to the right-of-way. Ms. Heaney spoke with the homeowner and explained the draw down to him. Ms. Heaney commented that her recommendation is that the work is fine as it is more maintenance than anything. Mrs. Cote commented that the Commission will get something from DES and it can be looked at further.

A wetlands permit was received in regards to Michael Sharp. This is a single family residence. The application is an after the fact permit application with standard review. Mitigation is not required and the permit will probably be granted as an after the fact.

Janet Cote commented that the Commission should think about projects that need research in

regards to the criteria for easements and acquisitions and if the Commission has funding for these purposes. There is a possibility of doing a warrant article to institute money from the change of use taxes that will go into the Conservation Commission fund for this purpose. There is a function in the RSAs to have the change of use tax go into a Conservation Commission account. One use of this account could be to protect the Plankey Spring. Nik Coates commented that a lot of communities do 50%-75% of the tax and other say a specific dollar amount. Mrs. Cote commented that the commission needs to look at how much land is in current use and how much will come out of use.

New Business:

Northern Pass Meeting:

Mrs. Cote informed the Commission that there is a meeting at the Old Town Hall on September 26th to talk to town counsel regarding the wetlands valuation for Northern Pass. Town Counsel has requested that getting a wetlands valuation would add more meat to the commission's testimony. A wetlands scientist would be needed for this. \$250 was budgeted for this purpose. Mr. Coates commented that if the project goes through the Commission would with some certainty be able to say how much value the town is losing. There are grants available and having the values can help identify comparable projects. This also tells the PUC of the adverse impact to the community. The Commission discussed several possibilities for local wetlands scientists. Mrs. Cote informed the Commission that they will need to vote to authorize money to be spent on this and to authorize the Commission to talk to other towns. Mr. Coates commented that attorney Christine Fillmore has some requests from the Conservation Commission. Ms. Fillmore needs to know if the project is consistent with the Master Plan and other land use initiatives and what the impact of the project will be on air and water quality among other requests. Mr. Coates informed the Commission that the Select Board did agree to go in with New Hampton and other communities for a geotechnical study and that Bristol would pay for ¼ of the price. Testimony is due no later than November 15th and the information should be sent to Christine Fillmore no later than October 31st. Mr. Coates advised the Commission to pull the Master Plan chapter that is most relevant to the Conservation Commission and highlight the information and send this to him. Sandra Heaney will do this for the Commission. Mr. Coates also suggested listing what resources will be impacted by the project and how the water quality will be impacted by the project crossing the river. Mrs. Cote commented that she will contact places for quotes for a wetlands function and value. Options for funding were discussed.

Sandra Heaney made a motion for a not to exceed amount of \$750 from the general budget for the purpose of hiring a wetlands scientist to do a wetlands function and value assessment for wetlands affected by the proposed NPT, seconded by Richard Batchelder. The Commission voted 3-0 in favor of the motion.

Sandra Heaney made a motion to authorize the Treasurer not to exceed \$1,000 to disperse funds from the Conservation fund for the purpose of hiring a wetlands scientist to do a wetlands function and value assessment for wetlands affected by the proposed NPT, seconded

by Richard Batchelder. The Commission voted 3-0 in favor of the motion.

Hemp Hill Road: Mr. Coates informed the Commission that there is a discussion regarding the replacement of a rotting pole on Hemp Hill Road. Mr. Coates talked with Burt Williams who told him that Hemp Hill Road is a public road and that Mason Westfall is the one who has told people that it is and always was a public road. The town history does not say how wide the road is. Mr. Coates asked the Commission if they have any documents regarding this issue. Mrs. Cote replied that she had heard from Mason that it was a public road and that there a lot of maps and papers at Mason's home.

Recording Secretary: The Commission discussed the alternatives for a recording secretary and it was agreed upon to have the Executive assistant attend the meetings and take minutes.

2017 Budget Preparation: The Commission discussed putting \$1 in the Secretary Position lines to keep those lines open. Water testing is done more often so the Commission agreed to increase the Water Testing line to \$300. Meetings and Memberships will remain at \$500 Materials and Supplies will increase to \$100. Maintenance of Properties will be left at \$300 and Professional Services will remain at \$250. A legal line will be added with \$200 in that line. The total proposed Conservation Commission budget is \$1,653.

Richard Batchelder made a motion to accept the 2017 proposed budget, seconded by Sandra Heaney. The Commission voted 3-0 in favor of the motion.

Old Business:

Plankey Spring: Testing was done and it's clean. Carroll Brown is working on an education piece and signage for the spring.

Mason Westfall Memorial: Mrs. Cote commented that a request was put in writing to the Select Board to consider a dedication to Mason Westfall at the Mica lot park. Mrs. Cote did speak with Mason's wife and she felt that the Mica lot was not appropriate for Mason. Mrs. Cote suggested some sort of dedication for Mason at the Plankey Spring. Mrs. Cote informed the Commission that the request sent to the Select Board will be withdrawn.

Work Session: Efforts will continue to purge and organize files.

Next Meeting Logistics: Next scheduled meeting October 5, 2016.

Individual Tasks Assignments:

Adjournment: Ms. Heaney made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Batchelder. The motion was approved 3-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Costigan

