MINUTES OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING OF
March 4, 2020

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held on March 4, 2020 at the Salem Town Hall, 33 Geremonty Drive, Salem, NH.

PRESENT: Ruth Isaks, Chairman; Linda Harvey, Vice-Chairman; Steve Boyd, Secretary; Dave Blake; Donald Marotte; Crystal Napoli, Alternate; and Karri Makinen, Community Development Coordinator.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Isaks introduced the commission members and went over the agenda.

OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS

1. Review of Minutes

MOTION by Mr. Boyd to accept the minutes of the February 5, 2020 Conservation Commission meeting. SECOND by Mr. Blake.

VOTE ON MOTION: 5 – 0 – 1 (Ms. Napoli abstained.)

2. Conservation Fund Report

Mrs. Harvey said, we had interest income in January of $150.18. During January we transferred money from the Citizens Bank checking account to a Citizens Bank sweep account of $900,000. The purpose for that is to get a higher rate of interest. There was no interest in January from the sweep. We had a payment to Granite State Fence for the Hummingbird Lane gate at one of the entrances into the town forest, of $1,290.00. We have a grand total in the Conservation Commission fund at this time of 1,000,009,338.87.

Chairman Isaks said, if there is any concern, the investment we have in the sweep account is not subject to the swinging of the stock market. It is only subject to the fluctuations in the stock market with respect to our interest rate which is at 1.55% which is the highest interest rate allowed from a New Hampshire bank. If it holds there, we accrue a little over $13,000 in interest. The fluctuations of the market don’t affect what is in the sweep account. It is like a savings account, not affected by the stock market.

Mrs. Harvey said, it is subject to changes in the Federal Reserve rate which went down a little recently. The rate is affected by the Feds, but not by the stock market.
3. Town Forest

Chairman Isaks said that there is a memo from Bill Dumont about the replacement of the sign. Glen is not here, so she is not sure if there has been any movement on that. Bill Dumont is recommending that we replace the sign rather than try to repair or update it. The question is, in terms of replacing it, where we will have it done and if we have a sign maker and if we want to have a high school group design it. We can wait until Glen comes back. Has there been any movement on it?

Ms. Makinen said no.

Mrs. Harvey said, if we go to the high school, she would suspect their agendas are already set for this year. She is not sure if there is any way to get something like this into their program. Maybe for next fall, or it could be done as a community service project. The current sign is wood. Do we want wood or metal? Wood needs maintenance. That’s what the current sign is. Bill Dumont used to take it home, sand it and repaint it and put it back up. So it could be a couple days or a couple weeks with no sign. With a metal sign, you eliminate the maintenance issue. She doesn’t know if the high school does metal signs. The State prison used to do it. We had them do our boundary and hunting signs. The fee isn’t as much as with a local sign company.

Chairman Isaks asked, the group who is making our banner, do they also make signs?

Mrs. Harvey said yes.

Chairman Isaks asked, can we get a quote from them on the sign?

Mrs. Harvey said sure, but we did that before but didn’t go through with it. At the time they wanted to know what kind of sign we wanted. The commission needs to decide what kind of sign they want.

Chairman Isaks asked, why not just do a replacement of the sign that we have, instead of a redesign?

Mrs. Harvey said we can do that, but its wood and will require maintenance in the future.

Mr. Boyd said, if we match other forests signs, it becomes easier to get used to seeing that type of sign. It will help the general public.

Mr. Blake said that metal signs last longer.

Ms. Makinen showed a picture of the current sign.

Mr. Blake said, he knows a sign maker in town, and he can get an estimate.

Mrs. Harvey said she can do the same, and get pictures. Pelham has some for their signs.

Chairman Isaks said it doesn’t need to be a particular design, it can just state what it is.

Mrs. Harvey mentioned that we need to pick the colors. The color on the current sign was supposed to be dark brown with gold.

Ms. Makinen said, there is dark green trim and the letters are gold.

Mr. Marotte said we could go with blue and white.

Chairman Isaks said Mr. Blake and Mrs. Harvey will get quotes.

Ms. Napoli suggested white letters.

Mr. Boyd said, the standard is brown and white.

Chairman Isaks mentioned the parking lot lease. Have we received and paid the invoice?
Ms. Makinen said, we received an invoice for $400 for the 2020 parking lot lease so we paid it and sent it back.

Chairman Isaks asked, has there been an extension in the logging contract?

Ms. Makinen said, not yet, Ron is waiting for a definite timeline from the logger, and when he has that, he will get us an extension.

Chairman Isaks mentioned the lock on the Hummingbird Lane gate. Has that materialized?

Ms. Makinen said she is waiting for an answer from Granite State Fence about getting a latch or some way to keep the gate closed. They said that they don’t have latches, but recommended that we put a chain around it. She thinks it would be difficult to get the chain to stay around it. People would be able to just lift it off the post. She thinks we need to get a metal ring attached to the post that the bar can rest on, and the chain can go through the ring. She will speak with DPW to see if they can do that. If not, we’ll have to reach out to vendors. The Fire Department has a knoxlock for us. That will go on when we have a ring and chain.

4. Conservation Commission Goals

Chairman Isaks asked, is there anymore more information on monitoring conservation easements?

Ms. Makinen said, not on monitoring, but on tracking the data from the monitoring. Don and Linda came in and started working on recording the data from the conservation easements. They are recording data from easements that have been monitored to date.

Mrs. Harvey said, there are a lot to go through. Then we need to figure out the worse violations from the last monitoring, and have those remonitored and try to figure out what to do about it. Chairman Isaks also mentioned the monarch butterfly conservation. Vicky Brown from Pollinator Pathways is supposed to be here for the April meeting. She will give us an update. How is the milkweed doing?

Mrs. Harvey said it is winter so she doubts it has done much of anything at this point.

Ms. Makinen asked, have you confirmed with her for the April meeting?

Chairman Isaks said she will contact her. She has a website and has a project she is doing for New Hampshire.

Mrs. Harvey mentioned the graffiti. Are we doing anything with that before the mosquitoes come out?

Ms. Makinen said she reached out to the Key Club students. They are busy on another project, but they said that after March 20 they can talk about it and work on a time. They are still interested. She will follow up with them at the end of the month.

Chairman Isaks mentioned the memo from Sonny Tylus about promotion cards/business cards. At one meeting we mentioned having something for handing out at a program. He felt that we may like business cards. The question is, whether or not we can use a business card. Business cards usually have information about the organization, the person’s name and contact information. A business card is for someone to refer to later for information for contact. So she is
not sure if a business card like this would be of use, and what we may put on it. Karri may have
to have her contact information on it. It is hard to have our names on it.

Mrs. Harvey thinks it would be useful to have a card or identification for each member to have
when we do site walks to hand to the person whose property we are seeing. Especially in a
situation when we have to go on our own. If you have something to give the property owner, it
reinforces that you really are part of that group. It wouldn’t have a name, but it would say Salem
Conservation Commission and would have contact information.

Chairman Isaks said, all the cards would have to be the same because he prints these 1,000 at a
time. So that’s why she suggested if we have a name or email, it would have to be Karri’s
information.

Ms. Makinen said her title is Community Development Coordinator. It would be the Community
Development Department, and it would have the department information to reach us, with the
town website and Conservation Commission website.

Mrs. Harvey said, and it would have the town seal. The town has business cards, so it would be
similar to that.

Chairman Isaks said, it could have the town seal and Karri’s title with a telephone number and
e-mail address. Do we want anything on the other side?

Mrs. Harvey said, you could always write your own name on the back.

Ms. Napoli said, with the mapping project, we could put a link to that on the card. Also, she
doesn’t know if the Conservation Commission itself has an organization email, but that may be
something. Have a centralized email that the Chairman can use, and have the contact through
that centralized email.

Ms. Makinen said, we could make a conservation email at salemnh.gov.

Chairman Isaks suggested that we put something together for the next meeting, and contact
Sonny, and we could look at a couple of options.

5. Review of Correspondence

Chairman Isaks said, the next item is information items from DES. These are decisions for
approval of applications. The first is for the property for the indoor sports fields with associated
parking at 6 Industrial Way. They approved the application for Plaisted Circle. And they
approved the application for the extension of the town sewer lines for Duston Road, Community
Street, and Lakeside Street. Those were all approved by NHDES. The next item is from the New
Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions, and this is their strategic plan. Did
anyone look at it? This is just for information. They want the Conservation Commission as a
group, to go through this survey and answer the various questions on the survey. It is rather
extensive and it would take time for us to do. She asked the commission to quickly look through
it, and she then read some of the questions. Maybe 2 or 3 of us can get together and look at that.

They want the feedback from the entire commission. It doesn’t have a date, she looked for that.
This came out at the end of February. If anyone is interested, she will get in touch with them and
find out when they are expecting this back. If it is still active, she will send an email out.

Mrs. Harvey said that would be a workshop. It may require a special meeting as a workshop
meeting.
Chairman Isaks said, the next item is the registration for the Saving Special Places on Saturday, April 4th. The registration is either by credit card or check. It is paid for, for us. You need to copy the registration form, fill it out and give it to Karri. They want this by March 20th.

Ms. Makinen said she needs it this week. She printed out copies of it, and you can fill it out tonight and give it back to her.

Mrs. Harvey said you have to go online to get descriptions of the workshops.

Chairman Isaks said you can copy off the pdf online, fill it out and email it to Karri.

Ms. Makinen asked who is thinking of registering.

Mr. Boyd said he may go and Chairman Isaks said she is going.

Mrs. Harvey said she is not sure yet.

Mrs. Harvey said these are good for training and for meeting the environmental players in New Hampshire like lawyers and people from the land trust.

There was discussion of this workshop.

Mrs. Harvey said she highly recommends going to this and the fall conference.

Chairman Isaks said, we will be voting on March 10th. Article 21 has to do with conservation land. We would appreciate your vote for that article. And also, Steve Boyd is running for Tax Collector. He would appreciate your vote. Crystal Napoli has indicated that due to additional commitments, she won't be able to serve on the commission. Chairman Isaks thanked her for her service and wished her good luck.

Mrs. Harvey said there is another article on the ballot that deals with taking away conservation land off Emery Road. It is not very much, and it is an important project that the town wants to do and this commission has voted to recommend approval of that in the past. The purpose of that is to improve drainage along the side of the road. They need to go into some conservation land to do that. We ask you to please vote for the removal of that small amount of conservation land.

Mr. Boyd said it is articles 9 and 14.

Mrs. Harvey said, one makes more conservation land, and the other is removing a small amount.

Chairman Isaks said Arthur Barnes was our Selectman’s representative. She thanked him for his advice and discussion of conservation issues.

Ms. Makinen said, there will be a call for candidates. Linda, Glen and Crystal’s terms are all up in April. There will be a call for candidates for all of those and Maureen Witley from the Town Manager’s office will reach out to you with materials to reapply. There is a conservation grants workshop on April 8th with information about LCHIP and a variety of other conservation grants. The meeting is at DES in Concord. Karri will be attending to get information. If anyone is interested, she thinks it is from 12:30 to 4:30. If you are interested, email her and she will send a link to register. She reached out to the Rockingham Planning Commission about the open space master plan update. They responded with a list of questions. We can go through that now or she can talk to Linda and Steve separately.
Chairman Isaks suggested that Karri email it to us.
Ms. Makinen said she reached out to the group at the high school about the banner design. She sent them photos but hasn’t heard back yet, but she will follow up.

MOTION by Mrs. Harvey to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3-II (d) – land acquisition.
SECOND by Mr. Marotte.

Mr. Boyd - yes
Ms. Napoli - yes
Mrs. Harvey - yes
Mr. Marotte - yes
Mr. Blake - yes
Chairman Isaks - yes

VOTE ON MOTION: 6 - 0
UNANIMOUS

Chairman Isaks said, we will not be back on television after.
The meeting went into non-public session at 7:44 p.m.

Minutes by: Susan Strugnell, Conservation Commission Recording Secretary
Approved: Conservation Commission
Date: