

Tamworth Conservation Commission

Draft Minutes of December 27, 2010 Public Hearing

Draft minutes to be reviewed and approved at a subsequent meeting.

Call to order – Chairman Ned Beecher called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Members present were Ned Beecher, Chele Miller, William Batchelder, Nelson O'Bryan, Margaret Rieser.

Public present were Sam Martin, David Little, John Mersfelder.

Introduction – Ned explained that the purpose of this public hearing was to invite public comments on use of TCC Conservation Fund money for assisting a non-profit organization in a land conservation project in Tamworth. The proposed action is enabled by NH-RSA (RSA 36-A: 4-a, I (b)) and adopted by the Town of Tamworth at the 2009 Town Meeting (Article #5). This hearing was publicly noticed more than ten days in advance by publishing in the Conway Daily Sun and posting at various locations in Tamworth. The intended procedure of the hearing is to (1) give a brief description of the project (Ned offered copies of a written description to those who wanted one), (2) accept public comments, and (3) entertain a motion from the Commission concerning any action TCC may take regarding funding of the land conservation project.

Project Description – Ned described the project as follows: The objective is to assist The Community School (TCS) in purchasing Tax Map 420, Lot 46 (known as the Beaver Brook lot), presently owned by Bob Floyd; TCS to grant a conservation easement on the property to the Town of Tamworth (to be managed by TCC). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to this effect has been signed by TCS and TCC. To date, all project funding has been by private donation to TCS, aided by fund-raising efforts by TCC. Closing is scheduled for Thursday, December 30, 2010. Conservation values of the Beaver Brook lot include open space, forest, wildlife habitat, Bearcamp River frontage, water quality, aquifer. This is the first of several pieces Bob Floyd would like to conserve through deeded conservation measures. The intended conservation easement will allow for public access and will be similar to other town-held conservation interests.

Public Comment – John Mersfelder stated support for the project. It is consistent with past efforts to protect water resources/ways; this adds to that effort. Floyd approached town with desire to conserve land, he will be able to continue farming activities consistent with TCC policies and goals. The project is consistent with a Libertarian view; the landowner is seeking a way in which he can continue to use his land as he sees fit. David Little asked for clarification: Is the MOU between TCS and TCC? Answer: Yes. Have the Selectmen been included in the process and where do they stand? Answer: Yes, there have been three meetings with the Selectmen. They support the project.

Discussion – There being no other public comment, Ned closed the public comment period and asked how much funds have been raised to date. Nelson figured that between funds already raised and known by him to be promised, the total currently stands at \$69,000 but there may be more pledged that he is not aware of. The fund-raising goal is \$90,000, which includes closing and other legal costs. Ned suggested that TCC consider approving an expenditure of \$5,000 as discussed at the meeting of December 10th. Chele asked if it is understood that this money is “as needed”. Consensus is yes, it will only be expended if other fund-raising comes up short.. Ned pointed out that the check would not be cut by end of week and, if needed, Bob would be

offered an IOU so that closing could proceed as scheduled. Margaret wanted clarification that TCC would be writing a check to TCS, not Bob. Ned agreed, that is the way it should be done. Chele suggested in that case, the IOU should come from TCS and not from TCC. General agreement.

Motion – Chele moved to authorize expenditure of up to \$5000 from the Conservation Fund if needed for completion of the Beaver Brook project. Seconded by Nelson. John M. asked will Bob Floyd accept IOU, and in the meantime will TCC continue fund-raising? Answer: Hopefully; and yes, fund-raising will continue. Margaret asked how many people have made donations? Nelson answered: 15 so far. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Announcements –

- Ned reported that the costs of the Gilman Forest project owed by TCC to SPNHF amounted to \$3050, somewhat more than was voted on by the Commission at the meeting of December 10th. He authorized payment so that it would be in the 2010 calendar year. This will be taken up at the next regular monthly meeting.
- Ned reminded TCC members that the Planning Board will be holding a public hearing for the proposed Groundwater Protection Ordinance on Wednesday, December 29th at the K. A. Brett School, 7:00 pm. He plans on speaking in favor of the ordinance and he believes that it is something that all members of the TCC should support.

Adjournment – Batch moved to adjourn meeting; Nelson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Submitted by Chris Conrod, TCC Admin. Ass't.