

Tamworth Conservation Commission

Draft Minutes – October 12, 2015

Draft minutes to be reviewed and approved at a subsequent meeting

Call to Order – Nelson O'Bryan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Commissioners present were Nelson O'Bryan, William Batchelder, Chele Miller, Rich Gerard, Bob Seston, Shannon Maes and Ned Beecher. Alternates present: Eric Dube and John Watkins.

Also present: Sam Martin.

Approval of Minutes for 09/14/2015 – Moved by Ned to accept the minutes as written. Shannon seconded, motion carried.

Announcements

NH-DES: Received complete forestry notification for Tax map/lot 412/17. Received notice of completion of review of a wetlands complaint concerning 120 Sunny Side Ave. DES concluded that no action needed to be taken on this complaint.

Town of Tamworth: Received copy of a “routine roadways activities notification” sent to NH-DES. The Highway Department intends to replace a collapsed 18” culvert with a new 24” culvert on Pease Hill Road.

Treasurer's Report/Financial

Bob reported that, to date, TCC has expended \$6583, 54% of its annual budget.

Received bill for \$300 from Mark Streeter for mowing the field at Waterfowl Haven. Mark did not mow as much as has been mowed in the past. Apparently there are some small trees that need to be taken out. Bob moved to authorize payment, to be applied to the maintenance/trails budget line. Rich seconded, motion carried.

Bob has reviewed town meeting records to get an idea of what and when warrant articles concerning TCC funds were voted on by the town. In the year 2000, the town voted to place in the Conservation Fund 100% of the Land Use Change Tax revenues, with a maximum of \$5000. This article remains in effect for an indefinite time period. Up to and including 2002, TCC introduced an annual article to have any unexpended TCC budget funds placed in the Conservation Fund. In 2003, the article appeared to be written so as to be interpreted as intending to extend the practice to all future annual budgets. No one on the Commission could recall such an article being submitted and no one could recall that any unexpended budget funds had been put into the Conservation Fund in at least the past ten years. It also appears that such an article would not be in compliance with state statutes. The best recollection, offered by Ned, was that the Commission decided somewhere around that time to dispense with introducing the article at annual town meetings.

Proposed 2016 Annual Budget: Going through the 2015 budget line by line, the Commission made the following changes. 1) Increase clerical expenses by 5% in anticipation of a “cost of living” adjustment that might be put on the warrant by the Board of Selectmen. 2) Increase Maintenance/Trails to \$300. 3) Increase Dues, Subscriptions and Meetings to \$600. 4) Decrease Tower Expenses to \$300. The total proposed budget is \$7311, which is \$4668 less than the 2015 budget. The decrease in the budget is due to the substantial repair work and view clearing done during this year that will not need to be done next year. Ned moved to submit the proposed budget to the Selectmen. Shannon seconded, motion carried.

Revisit LUCT: Further discussion on the amount of LUCT revenue going into the Conservation Fund. It's been 15 years since the maximum amount was set at \$5000. With inflation, that

amount is worth considerably less than it was in the year 2000. Bob moved to submit an article to the 2016 town meeting to see if the town will vote to have 100% of the LUCT funds, up to a maximum of \$7500, put in the Conservation Fund. Ned seconded, motion carried. Bob will see that the article gets written properly and will coordinate with Selectmen and town administrator.

Planning Board – Eric reported that the Planning Board is reviewing the floodplain and personal wireless facilities ordinances. He stated that the Capital Planning Committee has been working hard and doing a good job of planning for upcoming major expenses.

Conservation Easements

Kennett Osgood Road Parcel – Nelson reported that SPNHF wants to incorporate the Kennett parcel into the Porter – Rogerson Forest and will be seeking grant funds to purchase the land. Application for the grant funds will require a full appraisal rather than just an opinion of value. The quote for the appraisal is \$2200, as opposed to the \$750 for the opinion of value for which TCC previously agreed to cover half the cost. SPNHF does not want a conservation easement on the property because the Porter – Rogerson Forest is not under easement and they would prefer that the entire unit be under the same management standards. However, SPNHF is offering a deed provision that would give the town a legal interest in the property. Nelson will ask Tom Howe for an example of the provision for review by town counsel. Ned moved to authorize payment of up to \$1100 from the Conservation Fund to cover half the cost of the Kennett lot appraisal. Chele seconded, motion carried.

Public Education and Outreach – 250th Celebration: Nelson met with members of the celebration committee and they approved of all the possible options for celebration suggested by TCC. Any specific scheduling should be done through them to avoid conflicts. Nelson asks all commissioners to come to the November meeting ready to discuss which of the options they support and are willing to participate in, and specifics for planning. Plans need to be fleshed out by early December.

Easement Monitoring – Chele passed out copies of a recent NH Town and City article on the responsibilities of municipalities holding conservation easements and advised all commissioners to read it. She also reiterated her request to be invited to go out on monitoring trips.

Managed Lands and Trails

Fire Tower – Nelson reported that the painting and welding is complete. Mike Davis did the welding. Nelson does not have the bill available but he expects to have it soon. He would prefer that Mr. Davis not have to wait another month for payment. Ned moved to authorize payment to Mike Davis up to \$300. Shannon seconded, motion carried.

Bearcamp River Trail – Nelson reported that the trail needs some clearing work after the recent timber harvest on Community School property. The area in question is at the far eastern end, near the NHF&G wildlife management area.

Adjourn – There being no other business brought before the Commission, Batch moved, Chele seconded, meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Submitted by Chris Conrod, TCC Administrative Assistant.