

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – June 1, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair Wally Smith at 4:04 p.m. at Swanzey Town Hall. Committee Members Present: Gary Coburn, Wally Smith, Bob Goodrich, Ric Dell'Erba, Jane Johnson, Gary Coburn and Stephen Stepenuck.

ABSENT

Mike Morrison

OTHERS PRESENT

None

MINUTES

- Minutes of May 4, 2015 were considered. **Motion** by Stepenuck to approve the Minutes of May 4, 2015 with fix of typographical error on page 2. There was a second from Coburn. All were in favor except Johnson who abstained. **Motion passed.**

CONCERNS

Smith informed the members that there is a request before the Board of Selectmen for a Pumpkin Festival to be held at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in October.

NEW BUSINESS

Open Space Committee Rotation

Smith suggested a rotation – next meeting is Wednesday June 10, 2015. Coburn volunteered to attend June's meeting. Goodrich will attend on July 8th. Dell'Erba will attend in August 12th. Johnson will attend September 9th. Smith will attend in October.

Ashuelot River Community – Ad Hoc Committee

Smith explained the reason for the committee based on the offer of Todd Bergeron of Troy to improve the river landings for access by canoes and kayaks at Cresson Bridge and Thomson Bridge. Smith passed out the notes from the first meeting and a brief discussion was held regarding the items to be improved and the next steps to be taken by Bergeron which is to meet with the Board of Selectmen to get permission to move ahead with the project. Johnson said that Bergeron will probably also need to get approval from the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission.

Stepenuck made a **motion** in support of the improvements being offered in terms of safety and conservation and reducing erosion while providing canoe and kayak access to the river, second by Coburn, and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen

June 9, 2015 is the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Open Space Committee, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission to learn about the changes to West Hill/California Book conservation project in regards to hunting. The land owners want the right to post against hunting of bear and

predator species. The Monadnock Conservancy originally applied for and won an LCHIP grant, which guarantees hunting, but they also received an Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) grant which was a higher amount and which allows landowners to post their land. Stepenuck pointed out that someone would be responsible for enforcement of hunting rules. The members raised some issues to be presented at the Board of Selectmen meeting.

Municipal Facilities Review Committee (Info/Discussion)

Smith mentioned that he is on the committee. The group will be considering the long term needs of the various public buildings in town. It was noted that due to the location of the nearby Recycling Center, there could be drainage coming from the Recycling Center into the river at Dickinson Park.

Summer Monitoring dates (E.coli)

Smith passed out monitoring dates for May, June, July, August, and September 2015.

There was **motion** by Stepenuck to spend up to \$200 for monitoring pollutants in the Ashuelot River, second by Goodrich. Discussion: Johnson pointed out that this vote would be void should the commission learn that they already voted money for this effort. All were in favor.

Motion passed.

Cheshire County Conservation District – Potential Projects, if any – river monitoring

Smith said that Morrison reported that the Cheshire County Conservation District folks are open to considering projects and might send an engineer to discuss with the Commission.

OLD BUSINESS

Route 32 Survey Status (Steve)

Stepenuck reported that he spoke to John Bridges and Bridges said it would be \$200 or \$300 to conduct a fresh survey of the boundaries of Town-owned land. Smith said it is important to have certainty if the Commission is going to pursue the problem of access to Town-owned land further.

Motion was made by Johnson to spend up to \$350 for a fresh survey of the Town-owned property off NH Route 32. There was a second by Coburn. No further discussion and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Discussion continued about the gate put up by a neighbor which prevents accessing Town-owned land. It was noted that the gate may be on the State of New Hampshire right-of-way. Dell'Erba offered to research with the State of New Hampshire.

Expenditures Report (January to April)

Smith reported that expenditures thus far are \$138.71.

Wetlands Permit 196 E Shore Drive (Info only)

Smith informed the members that resident Jon Hoden did receive a wetlands permit and Smith reported that the Conservation Commission received a copy of the permit.

Mt. Cresson Status (Wayne Young trail walk; Well House Covering done??)

Stepenuck said the work has been completed at the well house. He gave a brief review of the work that was done to secure the structure so that it would not be a danger to hikers.

Stepenuck raised a question about trail maintenance and replacement or repairs of signs. He said a work day would be worthwhile. Coburn offered to call the Dillant-Hopkins Airport Manager to cut away some brush and trees to enhance the view when working at clearing around the airport beacon.

Discussion about the southern portion of the trail – and the fact that Wayne Young suggested some logging might be done, which might finance thinning out the top to enhance the view.

Date set for to walk the trail: Meet at the Cresson Bridge on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.
Stepenuck will check with Young for his availability.

Date for work day for trail maintenance: June 22, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. Meet at the Mt. Cresson parking area.

Discussion continued regarding the type of wood for signs.

Swanzy Natural Resource Inventory (Prior item)

Smith said that Barbara Skuly said there isn't a Swanzy Natural Resource Inventory. Johnson said she would ask Ryan Owens of the Monadnock Conservancy to see if they might have something similar that pertains to Swanzy.

Handbook for Conservation Commissions (prior item)

Johnson suggested that the members can Google information as needed.

Aquifer Ordinance (Prior History)

Fifteen years ago the Planning Board turned the idea down. There was a discussion about raising the issue once again. Smith said he found some information online from the State of New Hampshire which provides a model ordinance. About 50% of the communities in the State have an Aquifer Ordinance according to Smith. Johnson spoke about the fact that Swanzy is sitting on an aquifer that should be protected. Smith recommended the members visit the State website for information. Johnson said that she would raise the issue with the Planning Board. Stepenuck mentioned Richard Scaramelli who chaired the Aquifer Protection Ordinance Task Force in the past and he might have a model for Swanzy. Johnson will check with Scaramelli.

Position of Gates at Riley Conservation Area

Dell'Erba pointed out that the gates at the Riley conservation area can move into an unsafe position for motorists. He volunteered to see what he could do to keep the gates locked into a safe position.

REPORTS

ARLAC

Stepenuck said there is a new representative but members have not yet met him. Chuck Mills is the new representative.

Open Space Committee

Bernard reported the OSC wants to utilize Belding Field for events.

SWRP- NRC – no report

MAIL

Smith said NH Municipal Association magazine was received.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion** to adjourn by Coburn with a second from Goodrich. All were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary