

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2013

Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Commission. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Robert Goodrich, Vice Chair. Committee Members Present: Jane B. Johnson, Theresa DiLuzio, Stephen Stepenuck, Richard Dell'Erba.

Minutes of March 4, 2013 – Johnson **moved** to approve March meeting minutes, seconded by DiLuzio, all were in favor with abstention by Stepenuck since he did not attend the March meeting. **Motion passed.**

Absent: Deb Crowder, Gary Coburn, Michael Morrison

OLD BUSINESS

Terms of Membership in the Commission

A discussion occurred over the terms and status of the members of the commission. The commission requested that Town Clerk Donna Munson check in the book for information for term years for the commission and Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe followed up on that request by joining the meeting to discuss terms of membership.

O'Keefe reported that two regular members and one alternate have terms which have expired: Deb Crowder, Mike Morrison, and Ric Dell'Erba who has been serving as an alternate. If the members who would like to renew membership in the commission fill out the appropriate application forms, O'Keefe will provide the applications to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) to appoint the new members. Stepenuck asked about whether an alternate can become a regular member if the regular member leaves the commission. O'Keefe said the BOS appoints the member. When someone leaves, the BOS decides who moves into the position that a member is leaving open. Stepenuck asked about Deb Crowder, who is ill, and cannot participate. Crowder cannot take the oath so she has to get replaced for now. Later, when she is well enough, she can possibly be reappointed. As of today, two regular members are open, one opening for alternate. On the April 16, 2013, the BOS can confirm the appointments once they have received the appropriate applications.

O'Keefe introduced the subject of new Information Technology policy in regard to town email addresses. O'Keefe said everyone will be getting a town email address so volunteers and employees can use the town email address instead of their personal email addresses. He pointed out that the State of New Hampshire law regarding meetings of Town committees and commissions says any correspondence between committee or commission members is part of the public record. He also noted that there will be a website useful for setting up the email addresses. O'Keefe said some people might want to opt out of email and they would get correspondence via regular mail. He noted that using a second email

address can be a hardship on some people. In regard to using email for commission discussions, O'Keefe said that as long as there isn't a quorum, you can discuss issues one on one.

O'Keefe checked the numbers for the committee and determined that there are seven regular members and one alternate. Stepenuck said that he thought that the total authorized should be nine, seven regular members and two alternates.

O'Keefe reviewed the terms: Stepenuck and DiLuzio terms are up in 2014; Goodrich, Coburn, and Johnson terms are up in 2015.

Election of Officers - Stepenuck suggested that the commission wait to vote for officers when all are present. Election of officers will occur in May.

Mr. Pratts Wetland Application

The commission received documentation from the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) to consider a wetlands permit application from Mr. Pratt. Mr. Pratt has built a pond on his property on Route 10. The pond has been there for some time. While he should have obtained a wetlands permit at the time of building the pond, he can now apply for an after-the-fact wetlands permit. DES won't issue a permit until the application is accepted by DES. The law says that if you are going to impact a wetland, it should be done correctly. Stepenuck said that it is not unusual to ask for an after-the-fact permit. Stepenuck briefly explained a small homeowner application versus a standard application and the requirements for each. DiLuzio asked whether Vice Chair Goodrich would sign the document and send DES comments. Stepenuck said that given time to review the application, the commission can comment on the application, or decide not to comment to DES. If the commission doesn't act in time, then it has no say. Goodrich commented that he did not want to sign the document given it would waive the commission's right to intervene in the future. The commission agreed not to sign the application in order to preserve its right to comment on the property at some future date should changes be made to the pond in question.

3 Houghton Point Sand Piles

The commission next discussed a situation at 3 Houghton Point on Wilson Pond where sand piles have been left after completion of a project in October of 2010 by the homeowner at the site. Goodrich provided a series of email communications between himself and Rachel C. Elkins, the homeowner at the site. Elkins said she had no intention of moving the sand and her grandkids can play on the sand. There was a brief discussion about what leverage the commission might have with Elkins. The concern is sand leaching into the pond. Commission Mike Morrison who was not present at the meeting has been in discussion with the DES regarding the situation. It was agreed to postpone further discussion until May when Morrison will be in attendance.

Road side clean-up April 2013

The commission has supported Earth Day annually by sponsoring a road side clean up. A discussion was held regarding plans for this year's event. The signage was located at Town Hall. DiLuzio mentioned that the Open Space Committee has offered to support the event this year. Earth Day is Monday April 22,

2013. The clean-up event will be held from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Volunteers are asked to come to Town Hall to receive bags and directions and to choose an area for cleaning on a Town map. The Tuesday following the event is the day that the Town's Department of Public Works employees pick up the filled bags left at the side of the road. It was agreed that the signs should go out soon.

Johnson suggested Saturday April 20th as a possibility and that date was agreed upon by the rest of the group.

The following tasks were decided upon:

- Johnson will change the date on the signs, request additional bags from the State station at Base Hill Rd. and also request safety vests if they are available to borrow.
- Stepenuck will make up the directions for volunteers and do publicity for the event including articles for the Keene Sentinel, the Monadnock Shopper and a couple of radio stations.
- Dell'Erba will put out the signs on Town roads.
- DiLuzio will manage the bags and map at Town Hall and speak to Town Planner Sara Carbonneau about opening Town Hall on a Saturday. She will also make copies of Stepenuck's directions to pass out to volunteers. She will also check with Open Space Committee Chair Jeanne Thieme about a key needed to open and close up Town Hall.

DiLuzio left the meeting at 6 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Reports from Representatives

ARLAC - no news

Open Space Committee – DiLuzio had reported that the OSC will help with April clean-up day.

SWRPC-NR - Morrison wasn't in attendance - no news

OTHER BUSINESS

Ski craft on Wilson Pond

Dell'Erba raised the issue of ski craft on Wilson Pond. Wilson Pond is 72 acres. RSA 270:74 prohibits the use of ski craft on all public bodies of water less than 75 acres in size. Marine Patrol needs to be aware of the situation. The Marine Patrol can ticket folks who do not comply with the law. Johnson asked about whether the State should have a sign that prohibits use of ski craft. Dell'Erba said he would follow up on this. It was suggested he call Marine Patrol and discuss with them the possibility of a posted sign prohibiting ski craft from the pond. Johnson offered to research who to talk to at the State Marine Patrol. There was also a brief discussion on the acreage of the pond with various amounts being mentioned.

Old Septic Tanks on Wilson Pond

Stepenuck said he received a call from a resident who raised the issue of old septic tanks at the north end of the pond, near where the old amphitheatre and recreation center were. According to the caller, the recreation center had steel septic tanks that were not properly moved. The caller reported that if you go to the area in the summer, you can see a red cloud in the water. Dell'Erba noted that there is a lot of algae in that area. Dell'Erba said he will get his canoe and take a look at the area and report back

to the commission.

Johnson **moved** to adjourn, Stepenuck seconded, all were in favor. ***Motion passed*** and adjournment at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard".

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary