

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – May 6, 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 6:13 p.m. by Robert Goodrich, Vice Chair. Committee Members Present: Theresa DiLuzio, Stephen Stepenuck, and Michael Morrison.

Minutes of April 1, 2013 – were not reviewed

Absent: Deb Crowder, Gary Coburn, Richard Dell'Erba, Jane B. Johnson

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - Chair, Vice-chairperson, Others

The election of officers for the commission was tabled until the May 2013 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Elkins Permit

Bruno Kosheleff was in attendance at the meeting to discuss Rachel Elkins' sand pile situation on Wilson Pond. Concern is that the Conservation Commission will waive its right to have a say about the situation if the permit is issued per RSA 482-A:11;b. Morrison pointed out that if the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) has looked at the property and is ready to approve it, then perhaps the commission should do likewise.

Morrison **moved** to sign the Permit by Notification (PBN) Form, Wetlands File Number 2013-00211) , seconded by DiLuzio, all were in favor. **Motion passed.**
Kosheleff left at 4:20 p.m.

Mt. Caesar site walk

The site walk was done with Jeff Taylor on April 22, 2013 and very little Buckthorn was reported on the top of Mt. Caesar. On the way down, there was an old landing which the group noticed and it was reported that Taylor said that the land at that place was in classic early successive stage with plants that should be encouraged to grow. He was reported to have said that if the pines are removed and selected removal of the invasive species occurs, the land becomes open and grassy land with hybrid blueberry and other desirable species. Morrison pointed out that water bars are needed on the trail to eliminate erosion which is occurring on the trail.

Morrison suggested that professional opinions should be considered for projects, someone like Bruce Barry who has done a nice job at top of Talbot Hill. Morrison also suggested that Barry might be interested in becoming a member of the Conservation Commission.

Mount Cresson Forest

The commission reviewed a request that came by email from Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe regarding possibilities for a timber harvest of the Mt. Cresson Forest. O'Keefe noted that Bay State Forestry Service had walked the property and gave an estimate to the Town of \$20.00 per acre for a forest management plan, and additionally with the cost of lot delineation of boundaries not already blazed by the Yale Forest added in would result in a total cost of roughly \$3,500. He asked the Conservation Commission to determine whether they would like to have the forestry management plan prepared.

The commission said a management plan for Mt. Cresson had been done in the past and the members agreed to look for the plan amongst their documents. Stepenuck provided the plan to the commission about two years ago. Management plans need to be updated every so often, but Stepenuck did not know how often. Management plans have to be signed by a licensed Forester in the State of New Hampshire and updated. Stepenuck said he has the plan among his documents and just needs to locate it. Stepenuck said the boundaries were already done. DiLuzio suggested the commission table this discussion for now, and talk to Bruce Barry to get another opinion as to the management plan. Morrison agreed to speak to Barry.

Stepenuck made a **motion** to table any action at this time until the Mt. Caesar logging operation can be completed with satisfactory results and in accordance with best State of New Hampshire management practices, second by Morrison, all were in favor. **Motion passed.** DiLuzio offered to convey the decision to O'Keefe.

Roadside cleanup

Stepenuck reported that one hundred thirty-nine (139) bags were picked up and two dump truck loads full went to the dump. Over thirty-five people worked at picking up trash along Swanzey roads. Goodrich said he has one sign and Dell'Erba has the rest of the signs stored until next year.

Camp Berry

Camp Berry - Morrison reported two students have registered for Camp Berry. The cost to attend the camp is \$450 per student. \$745 is owed to New Hampshire 4-H Extension Service. Morrison **moved** to approve \$745 to send two kids to camp, second by Stepenuck, all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

NEW BUSINESS

MRHS Scholarship

The commission received two applications for scholarships which are awarded to a senior(s) who demonstrate an interest in environmental and conservation issues. Two student applications were received. Morrison **moved** to award the scholarships to Joslyn Sullivan and Bailey Mary-Katherine Marrotte for \$250 each (to be awarded on Wednesday, June 12, 2013), second by DiLuzio, all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Rail Trail Dedication

Bruce Bohannon joined the meeting at 4:23 p.m. Bohannon reported that the Conservation Commission had donated \$10,000 in the past toward work done on the Rail Trail. He reported that he is trying to

finish the trail from the culvert to the end of Pine Street. The Rail Trail folks are in need of \$10,000 donation to finish out the trail service and are hoping that the commission will donate toward the project. The whole project will cost \$20,400. Bohannon said he will go to the Board of Selectmen tomorrow night (Tuesday, May 7th) to get approval. Morrison asked if the trail will need money for future maintenance. A brief discussion was held regarding the Town of Swanzey Department of Public Works could be more involved in the maintenance of the trail.

Discussion was held regarding access to the trail and river access for canoes and kayaks. Bohannon also wants to see a gate on the turning circle for the parking area. Bohannon left at 4:50 p.m.

After Bohannon left a discussion was held about funding Bohannon's request. Morrison said he didn't think the request fits land conservation and said that he is not in favor of donating any dollars for it. DiLuzio said she is in favor because a lot of people in Town use it. Morrison made a **motion** to not donate any money for this project. There was not second for the motion and the motion fell to the floor. Morrison repeated that he thought the project did not fit the mandate of the committee. **Motion** was made by DiLuzio to provide \$5,000 to finish that section of the trail, but there was no second for this motion, and the motion fell to the floor. Morrison pointed out that the commission will be paying money to eliminate invasive species, and its mandate includes land acquisition and maintenance, and giving people access, but Morrison said the rail trail isn't this committee's purview.

Town Planner Sara Carbonneau was informed that the Commission decided not to donate to the project, in order to pass that information onto Bohannon.

Riley Property

DiLuzio asked about a sign for the property. She referred to a letter from the Riley's that thanked the Town for naming the area for their family and that they would be interested in donating for a sign for the area. Stepenuck said that Johnson Lettering did Mt. Cresson signs. DiLuzio said she would check on options for a sign. Goodrich said he would contact the Riley family to ask whether they would like to make a donation.

A discussion was held about how the signage should read. A decision was made that it should read as follows:

Town of Swanzey
Riley Conservation Area
Floodplain Management Area

Management Plan for the property was discussed. DiLuzio also asked about the Management Plan that was contributed to by Steve Roberge. DiLuzio wants to submit the plan to the Board of Selectmen with a cover letter with the recommendations.

Invasive species, a rain garden, river access, and mowing were topics that the commission discussed briefly in regard to the Riley property. Stepenuck said that the commission needs to discuss with the Board the goals that the commission has been working on and what would be action steps to follow through.

A brief discussion occurred regarding a deer stand that is on the property, possibly used by hunters.

DiLuzio suggested that if the stand is being used for hunting, it would it be dangerous for non-hunters who happen to be using the Riley property for hiking or river access. Stepenuck said that multi-use conflicts exist with recreational activity but that usually sharing the land can be worked out.

Reports from Representative

Asheulot River Local Advisory Committee (ARLAC) requested support for monitoring program for the Ashuelot River. - **Motion** by Morrison to support the monitoring program of ARLAC, with second by Goodrich, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Morrison **moved** to adjourn, seconded by Goodrich, all were in favor. **Motion passed** and adjournment at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary