

Town of Newport, NH
Newport Conservation Commission
Minutes of July 24, 2019
6:30 PM
Board of Selectmen's Room/Municipal Building
15 Sunapee Street/Newport, NH

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stanley Hannum, Chairman; Linda Dennis, Ken Dennis, Clifford Richer, Alternate; Barry Connell, BOS Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: Liz Emerson, Zoning Administrator

VIDEOGRAPHER: Louis Cassorla

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Hannum called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a roll call of those present.

AGENDA REVIEW: accepted as presented

MINUTES: April 17, 2019

Minutes of April 17, 2019

On a motion by Mrs. Dennis, seconded by Chairman Hannum; *the Commission approved the minutes of the April 17, 2019 meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-1 (Connell abstained).*

ADMINISTRATION: List of Conservation Easement Properties

The Commission went over the list of Conservation Easements in Newport:

Nelson Easement

It is the newest one in Newport (as of January 24, 2019). It has a 60+ page deed that has been recorded (Registry of Deeds). Most of the Nelson Farm on McDonough Road has been put into conservation.

Chairman Hannum asked if the Nelson Easement will need to be monitored like the other easements (Wells, Barton and Yeomans). Ms. Emerson stated not to her knowledge (right now). She told the Commissioners the steps she'd been taking to find out.

Mr. Dennis asked if this property was in conjunction with the Upper Valley Land Trust. He was told yes. It was on the Newport list to make sure the Conservation Commission (members) were aware of it.

Mrs. Dennis asked Mr. Richer what the difference was between a conserved area and the easement properties. Mr. Richer stated the Nelson property was under conservation easement. There was a general discussion among the Commission and Ms. Emerson about the Newport Conservation Commission's responsibilities with the Nelson property conserved area. The Commission (through Ms. Emerson) would have to ask the Upper Valley Land Trust to see if Newport was responsible for monitoring the Nelson land.

Newport Con. Comm. (Chandlers Mill Road)

Chairman Hannum stated the Conservation Commission did not have to do anything with those parcels. Ms. Emerson stated the Newport Conservation Commission is the technical owners of the land; thus the reason it was on the list.

Chairman Hannum stated nothing could be done on them (building) because they were so small and because of the Shoreline Protection Act. There was a short discussion on the location of the property.

Mr. Cliff Richer stated that the land on Chandlers Mill Road had been turned over to the Town so the public would have access to the river for fishing and recreational activities. He emphatically stated that that was the intent when the parcel was turned over and put under Conservation Commission custody. Mr. Roland Taylor subdivided the parcel of property on the southerly side of Chandlers Mill Road. In doing so I (Mr. Richer, surveyor) discovered he (Mr. Taylor) owned the land to the river. Therefore, anything from the road to the river was given to the Town for public access so the river would never be "locked up".

There was a short discussion on the land being put out to bid and the Conservation Commission's ownership of the property.

Ms. Emerson would do additional research on other parcels in, abutting and in the area of the river.

Chairman Hannum will talk to Town Manager Rieseberg about the parcels of land that were given to the Town for public access to the river. He stated that on one parcel there is a well-used trail to the water that people have used for river access for years.

Gilman Pond

There was a discussion among Commission members and Ms. Emerson on the Gilman Pond watershed. Mrs. Dennis and Mr. Richer stated that they would vote to have it become conservation land. The Water Department has had jurisdiction of the property. Now that the Water Department is under new management, it might be more receptive to having the Conservation Commission manage the properties around Gilman Pond. The Conservation Commission already has a Forestry Management Plan in place (through Meadowsend Timberlands Ltd) which includes Gilman Pond. It recommends minimal conservation activity to improve water quality.

Ms. Emerson will give a copy of the Forestry Management Plan to Mr. Connell, BOS Representative for reference.

There was a discussion between Mr. Connell and the other Commissioners to explain the Conservation Commission's viewpoint on land management around Gilman Pond. The Commission asked Mr. Connell to assist them with clarification with the "ownership and custody". Mr. Connell stated he would talk to Town Manager Rieseberg about the proposed Gilman Pond land management.

There was a short discussion on proposed land management around the pond as well as the water study done by UNH students.

Town Dump

Mr. Connell asked if leaching was taking place at the dump. The Town Dump property is being monitored.

Mr. Dennis asked Ms. Emerson to keep a list of all land that has been designated as conservation land. There were some properties that the Commissioners were not aware of; therefore it was good to have a list to refer to.

The Conservation Commission has not heard from Jolyon Johnson. In previous conversations he wanted to have the Conservation Commission buy an easement of 200 acres that would abut the Barton easement.

Mr. Connell asked, for clarification, if the Conservation Commission had the power to purchase land. He was told yes.

Mr. Connell asked where the Conservation Commission got the money for the purchases. He was told that money from harvested timber in Newport was supposed to go to the Conservation Commission (not to the General Fund). If the money goes to the General Fund, it defeats the purpose of conservation (in Newport).

There was a discussion on the need of a management program to get money back into the Conservation Commission coffers. The money would pay for the expenses of the Commission. There needed to be clarification.

The following are ways that other Conservation Commissions are funded by their towns:

- ❖ Forestry tax
- ❖ Land use
- ❖ Timber harvesting

In Newport, money from the last timber harvesting in the Town Forest went to the General Fund, Recreation Department and some to the Conservation Commission. There needed to be clarification as to where the money goes.

The Commissioners had a discussion on many aspects of the proposed Johnson purchase. They told Mr. Connell that:

- If the Conservation Commission had their own money they could purchase conservation properties
- The Commission is responsible for the trees on the Common and replacing them. The Town used to give the Commission money to purchase the trees; others trees were donated through donations by private individuals. In the past, Commissioners had planted them.

Maple Street Cemetery

There was no discussion at this time.

Town Forest (Johnson)

There was no discussion at this time.

Hagebusch, AKA Yeomans

Under Upper Valley Land Trust (believed Mr. Richer). There was no discussion at this time.

Wells

Under Upper Valley Land Trust (believed Mr. Richer). There was no discussion at this time.

Barton

There was no discussion at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Assignments for monitoring Conservation Properties in Newport

Chairman Hannum completed monitoring the Barton property for 2019. He noticed there was still trash being thrown on the conservation land. There are signs stating no dumping, but it has not stopped the practice. There was a discussion on what if anything could be done.

Assignments for monitoring 2019:

Wells: Mrs. Dennis

Yeomans: Mrs. Dennis

Johnson: Mr. Richer

Mrs. Dennis asked if the Newport Conservation Commission should put up the conservation tags to mark the easement boundaries when they do their monitoring assignments. There was a short discussion on the project.

Mr. Dennis and the other Commissioners officially welcomed Mr. Barry Connell, BOS Representative to the Conservation Commission.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Connell; *the Conservation Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:07 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Stetson

Scribe

Approved: August XX, 2019