

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020

Note: Minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Commission. Review, correction, and approval of minutes generally occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair Wally Smith at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH. Committee Members Present: Chair Smith, Robert Goodrich, Roberta Visser and Linda Hunt. Johnson joined the meeting at 4:32 pm.

ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Jeremy Turner from Meadowsend, Jeff Littleton of Moosewood Ecological, Director of Planning & Economic Development Matthew Bachler

MINUTES

The members considered the minutes from the meeting of November 4, 2019.

There was a **motion** by Hunt to approve the minutes of meeting of November 4, 2019. There was a second to the motion by Goodrich and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

NEW BUSINESS

Mt. Cresson Forestry Management Plan – Next Steps

Turner was present to discuss the plan's next steps. The property has four forest stands, and one of them is not useable for work; the recommendation is to leave as is. The other stands are subject to removal of some trees to allow for further growth of desirable trees. Hunt said she is in favor of harvesting to encourage growth.

Motion was made to move ahead with the Forest Management Plan by Hunt, with a second by Visser, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Smith spoke about a public workshop to present the plan to the public. Turner said they could conduct such a workshop. Turner said the best time for harvesting is between May and July. Perhaps a workshop meeting in April before the harvest on a Saturday to invite the public could be planned. Turner will provide a possible date for a workshop. Turner suggested the workshop consist of a meeting at Town Hall at 9 am and then a walk over to the land to be harvested. The members agreed. Turner said he would put together a Forest Service Agreement to provide to the Conservation Commission.

A brief review of the proposed maintenance by Meadowsend was discussed.

Hunt **moved** to approve expenditure from Mt. Cresson Forestry Account of not-to-exceed \$600 for trail maintenance and not-to-exceed \$400 for boundary maintenance to be done by Meadowsend Consulting Company as outlined in the Meadowsend Forest Services Agreement. Second by Goodrich and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

There was a discussion about harvesting with cut-to-length versus whole tree. Turner explained the difference between the two and the members said they preferred cut-to-length cutting for harvesting. Turner said there will be an upcoming Harvest Workshop at Indian Arrowhead Forest across from Keene Recycling Center. Turner said he would find out when that workshop is planned and provide that information to the Commission. Smith thanked Turner and he left the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Moosewood Ecological – FIELD WORK STATUS

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) supplementary field work was expected in December. Littleton said the field work has been completed and he should have the report by end of next week. He said they analyzed about 1800 acres of land in Swanzey. He said he did not find any rare plants. He said he did note invasive species and they tend to be along the rail trail and along the river.

The following invoice was received from Littleton:

Invoice of October 9, 2019 – for August-September 2019

Task I – Meetings	\$ 65
Task II – Ecological Assessments	\$ 1,820
Task III – Report	<u>\$ 520</u>
Total	\$ 2,405

Littleton said there will be maps and a list of types of forests and the bio-diversity of the region as an addendum to the NRI.

Johnson spoke about including the NRI in the Master Plan. Visser asked if the addendum will be added to the NRI.

Motion was made by Goodrich to approve the expenditure of \$2,405 to pay invoice of October 9, 2019 as shown above. Second to the motion was made by Visser, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Subdivision Plan Whitcomb Road

Bachler joined the meeting. Discussion was held regarding a plan to develop the Bell property across from the shooting range on Whitcomb Road. Bachler noted the Conservation Commission owns property off Sawmill Road, which makes it an abutter. The plan is to subdivide the Bell property into 4 lots. There would be three curb cuts. Goodrich pointed out the site used to be a location to drop off sewage. There was a sewage lagoon on the property at one time. Bachler said a letter dated in 2012 from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) acknowledged that the lagoon was closed so Bachler said it has been closed at least since then if not longer. There was a discussion about the 125 foot setback from the South Branch of the Ashuelot River which the plan complied with. The lots are mostly 5 acres and one lot is about 11 acres. There were no further comments or discussion regarding the proposed subdivision and Bachler left the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Airport Meetings – Aquifer Protection

Smith introduced the subject and asked Visser to bring the Commission up to date on the project. Visser said her research shows that the airport management is making an effort to implement the airport Master Plan. She said it is hard to monitor what they are doing since they had only one agenda and one set of minutes posted on their website. The question brought up at that point was what the Swanzey Master Plan has in it about the airport.

Visser shared information from reports regarding pollution to aquifers. PFAs are shown as cancer causing and are showing up in aquifers. Fire foam issues, PFAs have migrated from recycling centers, and there is no way to clean it up. Visser said groundwater testing wells could be done and she asked if we could ask the airport authorities to consider putting them in. Smith said the possible liability could be huge if pollution occurred. Johnson said Bachler will be holding meetings for updating the Master Plan for land use. Smith said Bachler will be monitoring action at the airport so that if there is something of concern, he will let the Conservation Commission know about the situation.

Visser left the meeting briefly to speak to Bachler and when she returned to the meeting she reported that he said the State of NH regulates some of the pollution possibilities at the airport like chemical, gas, and oil spills and he would research the regulations and get back to Visser and the Conservation Commission with information.

New Hampshire Wetland Rules

Smith spoke about the meeting held in December and he said he copied the regulations and passed out copies to the members.

Annual Inspections – Land Stewardship Program

Smith passed out the inspection reports completed by Bob McKelvey.

Motion by Smith to pay Bob McKelvey \$200 for the inspections completed for Mt. Cresson and Honey Hill. Second by Goodrich, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Barry Conservation 4-H Camp Status

Johnson said she hasn't had feedback from Mike Morrison as to a student to recommend for the camp but she will prepare an application to take to the Guidance Counselors at Monadnock Regional High School.

REPORTS

Expenditure Report

Smith passed out the expenditure report covering January 2019 to October 2019. Total expenditures are \$11,030.51.

Interim Fire Chief

Smith passed out the information about the Interim Fire Chief.

Email address change

Smith's new email address: insuranc@twc.com

ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. There was a second to the motion by Hunt and no further discussion. All were in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary