

MEETING MINUTES

ALBANY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, September 2nd, 2014, 5:30 pm

Members present: Rob Nadler, Jack Rose, Josephine Howland, Paul Brown & Cort Hansen. Dick VanDyne alternate.

Rob called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Cort noted that the minutes for the meetings on 7/8 and 7/19 still required approval. Josephine made a motion to study the minutes before approving them, the motion was seconded and approved. The approval of the minutes of the two meetings were then tabled.

Jack updated the members on the status of the NH Fish and Game take-over of the former NHDOT site adjacent to the Town forest property. The topic had not made the NH Executive Council agenda schedule in August but the matter was expected to be addressed in September. Rob and Jack explained the current buildings on the property and the plan for improvement and winter plowing on the property in exchange for use by the Town and the farmers using the agricultural fields. Jack noted a 99 year lease arrangement which would be included in a MOU to be made between the Town and the NHFG once the transfer from the DOT had been completed. Rob noted that the establishment, or cooperation with, a non-profit organization would be necessary to procure grant funding for both improvement and access to the fields on the NHFG site.

Rob updated members about the subject of water supply on the field area. Rob has had discussion with Greg from the Conway Village Fire District. He said that there are several types of wells in and around the property, including test wells and monitoring wells. The monitoring wells cannot be tapped for water as they are part of a long-term study of water pollution in the village area. These wells have locks on the caps. Cort noted that most of the wells on around the field may be in this category since there is little evidence of recent vehicle tracks around them, unlike the test wells west of the CVFD property Rob said that he was meeting with Greg and Olivia Saunders from the UNH CES on Friday to discuss this problem. Olivia thought the Town needed to supply water for the farmers but Rob said that the Town could not fund this project. It was his hope that perhaps the CVFD may be able to assist the farmers with a solution. A discussion of driven point water sources was made with the likelihood that driven points may be both simple and affordable.

Rob noted that Colton Dow has begun work on his portion of the field. Mowing has been done and he has started to harrow. Apparently he has needed to obtain a heavier tractor to finish harrow work. Dow expects to plant oats shortly to start improving the field soil and conditions. Dow has been approached by visitors inquiring about dog use once agricultural use of the field has begun. There are no plans to change restrictions on dogs and the issue will be monitored.

Rob said he would like to study the idea of creating a wide, roadside parking lot on the west end of the Swift River property. It would be cheaper, more open to monitoring use and easier to maintain for winter access. He hopes to broach this idea with the DOT commissioner shortly.

The farm road access was discussed. With the the recent departure of Saco District Ranger Mike Martin, the project has been idled. Martin had recently indicated that the USFS cannot assist with design or construction since the land is not federally owned. Rob said we need to go back and contact USFS For-

est Supervisor Tom Wagner. Rob was hoping to renew the agreement with Wagner to assist the Town and if not able to achieve that, obtain a special use permit for long term use of the access road by the Ranger Station. Rob noted that the USFS wants to move the current steel gate on that road up to the entrance of the dirt road at the edge of the pavement in order to more clearly monitor use from the station building. The project would need the cooperation of the CVFD since ownership of the R.O.W is vague.

Cort reviewed his recent walk of the forest property with USVLT's David Paige as part of their annual conservation easement agreement. Cort met with David on 8/29 and walked the agricultural field showing the work completed this season, and walked a portion of the Swift River, Wye and Trestle Trails to observe use and conditions of those trails. River bank erosion was noted in areas along the Swift River Trail. They then went up to Bald Hill to walk the property there where they made several forays into the property from the south checking on property bounds and use and cleaning the roadside of a small amount of litter. Then they went into the Thorne Hill development to access the property from the end of the cull-de-sac on Culter Lane where they walked the east side of the property from the north bound to the south bound along the Conway/Albany Town boundary.

Rob said that the members should plan on a work day in October to work the field by Rt 16 to try and cut brush and small trees along the ditch lines in that area. It was agreed to wait until the foliage drops to start this work.

Jack moved to accept the minutes for the meetings of 7/8 and 7/19. Josephine seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the minutes were approved 5-0.

With no other topics to address, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting and the meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Cort Hansen, Conservation Commission Secretary.