

MEETING MINUTES

ALBANY COMMON LAND GOVERNANCE BOARD

Tuesday, January 31st, 2012, 5:30 pm

Members present: Rob Nadler, Jack Rose, Dick VanDyne, Cort Hansen, Josephine Howland, Steve Knox Alternate.

Rob called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the 11/30/11 meeting. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the minutes were approved 5-0.

Rob discussed the articles that need to be written by the LGB board for inclusion at this year's town meeting. Those include; 1.) Allow Conservation Commission to be changed from 3 to 5 members, 2.) If approved by the NH Legislature, permit 3 members to be elected and 2 members to be appointed, 3.) Create a 'conservation fund' as allowed in NH RSA 36-A:4 to deposit all revenue from the Albany Town Forest, 4.) Any other articles suggested regarding Conservation Commissions need to comply with State statutes on the formation and operation of a conservation commission. According to the Town Counsel, there is no need to dissolve the LGB since it has no statutory authority under NH law. The Albany Select Board will sponsor these articles. Jack asked about #2 the sponsorship of legislation by a member of the NH Legislature. Steve said that it is likely too late for any further legislation to be introduced in this session of the Legislature. Senator Gallus has been contacted regarding this and we need to provide the frame work of what we want. Discussion went on about whether such legislation should be written specifically and solely for the Town of Albany, or if the legislation should encompass the entire community of Conservation Commissions. The Board thought it best to leave this decision up to the sponsors of the legislation and their best advice. Rob provide a copy of the current RSA 36-A:3 dated 6/27/1997, titled Composition of Commission, which defines the membership of Conservation Commissions and how they are appointed. The change in the wording of the fourth sentence would read; ...and in towns the members of the commission *may* be appointed by the selectmen, *or have 3 members elected*. The change would be the bold italic words.

Rob made a motion to provide this list of articles to Kathy Vizard for discussion at he next selectman's meeting. Dick seconded the motion, and the motion was approved 5-0.

Rob asked for the LGB board approval to go to Don Johnson of Forest Land Improvement to initiate a Forest Plan for the property. The board agreed after discussion on whether said work would involve any payment prior to town meeting and deciding it would not do so.

The discussion on a budget for the Conservation Commission was started. Rob suggested that we fund the Conservation Commission the same as we funded the LGB for FY 2011. Within that budget would be sufficient funding to cover any payment necessary prior to the first timber harvest.

Rob asked Cort if he could contact Paul Pinkham Conway CC chairman to find out how they budget each year and how they make disbursements for payment of invoices.

Rob will e-mail his copy of the press releases to edit down into what we can use for this year's Town Report. It was suggested that the back page of the Report could be used for color photographs of the property, most of which we have digital copies of already. The final edited LGB report will be inside the Report.

Jack said he would investigate if WMUR-TV's NH Chronicles would be interested in doing a story on the land purchase.

It was agreed that the Board needs to start some sub-committees to handle the various new tasks regarding the management and planning of the Forest such as; the working with USVLT on the Land Management Plan, liaison with the USFS on the field portion of the property and access in that area, brush mowing, trails construction/maintenance, access issues, etc. A discussion of the possible hay-ing of the fields went on and whether contracting a lease on the field or soil and grass improvement could be done by the LGB/Conservation Commission.

Jack mentioned that he had a call from Paul Whetton, who is associated with the model aircraft club that uses the field. Jack reiterated that the LGB had no intention of changing use in that area. Albany should require a certificate of insurance naming the town as additionally insured to give the liability protection.

Rob speculated that if the Conservation Commission could be appointed now they could immediately begin work on some of these projects. He suggested we begin monthly meetings to start work. Since the LGB has been authorized by the selectmen to work on behalf of the town, they are authorized at least through Town Meeting time. It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Friday, February 10th at 5:30 pm.

With no further business, Rob moved to adjourn, Josephine seconded the motion and the meeting closed at 6:55 pm.

Cort Hansen, Board Secretary.