

MEETING MINUTES

ALBANY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, May 2nd, 2023. 6:30 pm

Members present: Cathy Ryan, Cort Hansen, Kevin Tilton, Mike Steward. Remotely: Sean Wadsworth. Public: Saralyn Smith – Town of Conway

Cathy called the meeting to order at 6:32pm and noted that Sean was attending remotely.

Under new business, Cathy introduced Saralyn Smith from the Town of Conway who was attending the meeting to request permission to use a portion of the field area adjacent to the Swift River trestle for a fireworks display to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Kennett High School on Friday, September 22nd 2023. Discussion followed with Kevin suggesting that the first step would be to check with USVLT to make sure that there are no issues with the easement on the town forest. Cort asked about clean-up which Saralyn said would be handled by the fireworks company and volunteer crews along with the Conway Village Fire District which would also be present as a precaution. Kevin made a motion to approve the use of the field pending USVLT approval. Mike seconded the motion and the motion was passed 5-0. Sean said that he will communicate this request to the USVLT once the draft minutes were available. Saralyn indicate that they would need an answer within 30 days.

Cathy asked for approval of the draft minutes from the 4/4/23 meeting. With no further questions or discussion Mike made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting and with a second from Sean the motion was passed 4-0-1 with Kevin abstaining due to his being absent at that meeting.

Cathy noted that Kelley Collins, Albany Town Administrator, had sent out a copy of the letter from Andy Grigel of the Conway School District regarding installing a surface water line in order to irrigate the playing fields at the Kennett Middle School. The line which would run from the Swift River would cross town forest property. Discussion followed primarily on whether USVLT easement restrictions may impact this request. Sean said that he will also communicate this request to the USVLT once the draft minutes were available. Kevin suggested that Andy Grigel be made aware that the commission is seeking approval from USVLT so he knows that his request is being considered since he will be looking for an answer before the summer.

Cathy mentioned that she had received a request from resident Jennifer Perkins to use the field area as a site for the annual Pow-Wow event that was formally held at the First Bridge location in North Conway. Discussion followed and primarily focused on the issue of parking for attendees and whether there would be adequate space for as many vehicles that may be present over the two day event and if the USFS would object to that much traffic going across their property. Cort suggested that the commission should review other conservation commission's policy for use of town forest land and set up a standardized form for any such requests along with any requirements or restrictions that would be needed. Sean said that a review of the USVLT easement restriction should be done in order to make sure any such policy was in compliance with the their guidelines.

Under old business, Cathy noted the trail work day planned for May 20th at 8:00 am. Kevin said that he would be unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Sean asked about boundary line maintenance and Kevin said it could wait until later in the summer or fall.

Cathy noted that a funding source for the cost of a Timber Management Plan was still needed. Kevin said that he would contact Forester Tim Molin who had quoted a price for the task so that he knew we were still working on funding.

Kevin said that the silt fence may have been removed by DOT, but since the snow had gone the recent rains had swollen the stream such that he could not determine if it was still there.

Farmer contracts were discussed and the Davis Farm contract would not require amending as previously planned since the grant request he had submitted was not awarded to him negating the need for a contract extension. The Davis Farm contract expires in August of 2024.

Sean asked about whether or not a donation box could be provide at trailheads in order to receive money for the Conservation Commission or the Conservation Fund. How secure those donations would be, and the accounting for cash donations were discussed, with apparently some conservation commissions wary of this approach. Cathy said she could look into the NH Municipal Association for guidance on the question of donations. Cort said that NHACC would also be a good source of information.

Sean noted that the Valley Pride Day was coming up on Saturday the 6th. The Conway transfer station would wave there restrictions on how much waste and type of waste could be brought in on that day. Sean said that there was a limit of 6 items on that day that would normally be restricted or not allowed.

With no other business to discuss and with no other public comments, Mike made the motion to adjourn, Sean seconded the motion and the motion was approved 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

The next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, June 6th, 2023 at 6:30pm.

Cort Hansen, Conservation Commission Secretary.