

MEETING MINUTES

ALBANY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 2nd, 5:30 pm

Members present: Rob Nadler, Jack Rose, Dick VanDyne, Cort Hansen, Josephine Howland, Paul Brown alternate. Sara Knox Albany Select board, Carol Andrews, Executive Director NHACC.

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

Rob introduced Carol Andrews of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions who came to the meeting at our invitation in order that she advise us on the responsibilities of conservation commissions in NH. Rob gave a brief review of the history of the Conservation Commission and the background of the Town Forest and our relationship with USVLT as the easement holder on the property.

After a question about the how to account for revenue from forest harvesting, Carol explained the Forest Maintenance Fund (FMF) and that all revenues generated from forest harvesting, etc., should be deposited into the FMF. FMF's are distinctly different from the Conservation Fund (CF). Conservation Commissions administer the FMF which can be used to maintain or manage the Town Forest. Expenditures from the FMF must be approved the legislative body (town meeting) and not simply by a vote of the conservation commission. Land purchases however, would have to be done with the approval of the Select board and town meeting.

Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) funds may be deposited in the CF or to the town's general fund according to the wishes of the town. The same is true of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PLIT) or timber tax revenues. Other sources of funding include annual appropriations, rollover from conservation commission operating budget, municipal fund balance, grants, private donations or bequests. More details on CF and FMF accounts and the relevant NH statutes can be found in the Municipal Conservation Fund Handbook published by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests.

Questions regarding the scope of the Conservation Commission pertaining to wetlands were answered with the individual towns choosing to have either the Planning Board or Conservation Commissions handle wetland permits.

Rob asked about the representation and voting authority of the representatives from the select board and planning board. Carol said if appointments are made in the same manner as the other members and if the term of office is the same as other board members then these representatives may vote as a regular member.

Regarding wetlands inventories; conservation commissions are required to keep an inventory of both wetland and all natural resources in the town. Carol said that it was up to the conservation commission to decide how detailed to make these inventories. She suggested going to the "Granite System" to print map inventories of the natural resources of the town.

Jack asked about the the benefits the conservation commission gained from membership in the NHACC and Carol explained the various benefits such as e-news letters, web presence, educational materials, the annual meeting (this year; 11/2/13), handbook (available for printing on-line), etc.

Josephine asked about the conservation fund. Carol explained how donations and gifts can be collected and she suggested that if the quantity is not too many, that the Select board approve each one. Conser-

vation Funds are monies that are kept in a non-lapsing account which allows the conservation commission to budget for anticipated expenses or important projects. Private donations are permitted to the CF and may be tax deductible for the donor. Spending monies from the CF does not have to have the approval of the town meeting or select boards for regular maintenance purposes, however some expenditures may require additional public approval or authorization.

Before leaving, Carol suggested that Conservation Commission meeting can be posted on the official town web site if desired.

Rob update the members on the status of the field mowing by NHIAF which should start soon.

A motion to approve the minutes of the 6/4/13 meeting was made. With the motion seconded, a 5-0 vote approved the minutes.

Cort and Rob discussed the progress that had been made since the last meeting on trails and signs. On 6/21 and 6/24 Paul, Rob and Cort worked on the kiosks which are now about $\frac{3}{4}$ complete. On 6/22 partial staining was done on the materials and kiosks along with the trail sign posts. On 6/23 Rob and Cort dug post holes for the kiosks at the model airplane landing area and at the timber landing site near the new gate. They also dug and planted all the sign posts for trail signs at the 4 different location and put up all the trail signs at all the intersections in the trail network, except for the far western end, which is not completed yet. Now all the existing trails are signed and blazed. They also put up the metal Albany Town Forest/Carry in Carry Out/No fires/No motorized use signs at the campsite near the timber landing and near the trestle site by the river and moved the existing one off of USFS property on to it's own post on Albany property. They reported that weekly mowing of the picnic site had been on-going for the last 7 weeks. Cort said they were hoping to have the kiosks up and ready for the town picnic.

After planting seed on the timber landing area Cort suggested that we should fertilize and lime the area as well as the area where the topsoil was spread near the trestle at the same time. With the rainy weather that the seeds have had a good start and that fertilizer can be spread to stimulate growth.

With a motion to adjourn, the motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Cort Hansen, Conservation Commission Secretary.