

**Town of Northwood
Conservation Commission Minutes
August 6, 2013**

Chairman Steve Roy calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Stephen Roy, Vice Chairman Steven Hampl, Thomas Chase, Alternate Loren O'Neil, Board Administrator Linda Smith, and Board Secretary Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

Absent: Wini Young, James Ryan, Paul Lussier, and Alternate Michael Matson.

MINUTES: The minutes of May 7, June 3, and June 4, are postponed to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Northwood Cove Village District

Ms. Smith states that the board of selectmen is holding a public hearing to convey a deed, a similar process to the Masten property that was addressed in May. She states that this is for the private roads in the area only and no land is involved. She explains that the location is Northwood Village Cove Association. She states the town took some roads within the development because of tax deeds they acquired. She reads a portion of the deed and explains that the village is going forward as a new district and will maintain the roads in the district. This deed is to state that the town does not have any rights to any of the roads in the district. She states that there is no land being conveyed and is an administrative item, as required by statute for the commission and planning board to comment.

Ms. Smith explains that the process is that the selectmen will hold two public hearings, which the state statute requires, along with comments to be provided from the planning board and conservation commission. She encourages members to attend the hearings for further information. **Mr. Roy makes a motion, second by Ms. O'Neil, to forward a memo to the selectmen noting the conservation commission discussed this and had no concerns relative to conservation matters. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.**

2013 Budget

Ms. Smith provides copies of this year's budget and expenditure report.

General discussions are held regarding various accounts and the possibility of cutting on the Giles lot next year as well as blazing and doing a maintenance cut to the Guptill property.

Mr. Roy suggests increasing contracted services, line 390, to \$2,000 and reducing line 491, town forest land management, to \$1,000. He states that this will still be a level funded budget, \$4,752. General discussion ensues regarding the other line items such as the maps and map racks. Staff will look into the

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condition of the maps, possibly ordering additional map racks, and address accordingly.

Ms. O'Neil makes a motion, second by Mr. Hampl, to increase line 330 to \$2,000, reduce line 491, to \$1,000, and recommend the 2014 conservation commission proposed budget to be \$4,752, which is level funded. Motion passes unanimously; 4/0.

OLD BUSINESS

Yeaton-Land Acquisition ~ Map 206; Lot 2

Plans are provided and reviewed. Mr. Roy provides an update regarding the Yeaton property. He states that town counsel reviewed the existing deed description language and it was determined to not be suitable. Bill Wormell was hired to survey the property and create a new description. The survey is now complete and Mr. Wormell has been paid for his services. Mr. Roy states that the commission can now proceed with scheduling the closing.

Ms. Smith states that town counsel was sent a plan on Monday and will review and comment. Ms. Smith explains the closing process and suggests scheduling a public hearing for the commission for August 27 followed by a meeting with the selectmen for their signatures.

Ms. Smith will send a memo to the selectmen regarding the closing information for the Yeaton property.

Stewardship Funds

Mr. Roy states that a legal interpretation from town counsel was requested regarding using conservation land funds for stewardship contributions. He states that the commission requested that he speak with The Society of the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF) again regarding easement monitoring and training. Mr. Roy states that he was asked again by the Society if the commission would be providing funds for stewardship for the Wallman and Gallagher projects. He explains that town council's opinion on the matter was requested and this opinion has now been received in writing. Mr. Roy states that the decision for the commission is to make determination if the document should be made a public document, which would allow the opinion to be provided to the Society and other agencies. He notes that there is the possibility of another project forthcoming.

Ms. Smith states that the commission should decide to make the legal document public or to keep sealed. Further discussion ensues. Mr. Chase feels that releasing the document would be beneficial. **Mr. Chase makes a motion, second by Mr. Roy, to share the legal opinion and to make available as a public document.** Additional discussion ensues. Ms. Smith recommends that

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the commission make the opinion from counsel a public document. She explains that this is an opinion and the commission can read the opinion and agree or disagree. She adds that this is an opinion only and is not binding the commission in any way.

A discussion is held regarding the RSA relative to the commission being able to give donations to non-profit organizations. Ms. Smith states that in order for this to be an option for the commission the statute requires a warrant article be passed at town meeting. Mr. Roy states that at this time he does not feel it is a good time to present this change at town meeting.

The motion and second are withdrawn. This item is postponed to the September meeting, at which time copies of the opinion will be made available for further review and discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn, second by Mr. Roy. Motion passes, 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary