

**Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the
Walpole Conservation Commission
November 4, 2019**

Members Present: Alicia Flammia (Chair), Laura Hayes, Lewis Shelley, France Menk, Steven Dumont (Recording Secretary), John Peska (Vice Chair),

Alternates Present: Myra Mansouri, Peter Palmiotto, Kelli Wilson

Members Absent: Gary Speed, Jackie Kensen, Elaine Heleen

Others Present: Peggy Pschirrer (Selectboard Representative), Alex Barrett

Call to Order: Alicia called the meeting to order at 7:29 PM.

Seating of Alternates: none required.

Lew mentioned that in the previous minutes, Other Business, line 2, the panel will be screwed on, not a sliding panel. Lew voted to approve the minutes as amended. John seconded. All in favor.

Public Business:

1. Treasury: Conservation account balance is \$132,637.63, Mason non expendable is \$14,089.21, Mason expendable is \$345,373.47, Forestry account is \$36,447.96, Walker Road account is \$4,433.50.
2. Correspondence:
 - a. Trails for People & Wildlife Guide.
 - b. Notice of Tom Beaudry Educator of the year award.
 - c. NH ACC Dues.
 - d. Letter from selectboard about Old Stage Road discontinuation.
 - e. Barry Conservation 4-H Camp thank you note.
 - f. Southwest Regional Planning Commission Manual.
 - g. Supply Lines Drinking & Groundwater newsletter.

New Business:

1. Alex Barrett - Long View Forestry. In attendance to update the WCC on the rapid assessments he has done and discuss the next steps. Alex handed out and went over his priority list of the forests, which includes the Fanny Mason, the Reservoir, the March/Nelson and the Hooper Forests. He mentioned a culvert on a snowmobile trail in the Reservoir Forest that is being undermined and needs to be repaired. He recommends any future forestry work done at any forest be paired with invasive species control. Alicia noted there is a common theme of invasives in all the forests. John asked what the protocol is with invasives. Peter said the invasive control would be before and after forestry work to help the new growth come in without invasives choking the new growth out. Alex noted it's about control and not eradication. Working on the hot spots is important. Peggy asked how often we would need to do invasive control on any given forest. Alex noted it is a tricky answer. If you've let the forest go without any invasive control for a long

time, the first treatment is critical. After that it is more of slowing the spread. It can be an annual process. Lew asked about the 22 acres in the Fanny Mason annex, and how difficult it would be to remove the large amount of invasives there. Alex thought it would be very difficult. Steven asked from what account any invasives or forestry work would be drawn from, and if it needs to be from the Forestry account. Alicia has not heard of any rules or guidelines that specify this. It was noted that the Forestry account will likely be drained from the work on the dam at the Reservoir forest. Alicia asked how many forests we had on our lists for rapid assessments. It was thought we had 7 or 10. Peter mentioned that the Mason Forest has its own fund. Steven asked what the steps would be if we were to determine we would like a certain forest to have some logging done. Alex would develop a more formal plan, building on his rapid assessments or past forestry management plans. He would flag and mark the trees for harvest, put together a prospectus for work, and go through a contractor selection process. Alex noted that this winter would probably be too soon. Alicia asked about logging the Mason Forest, since it has had some previous work and has an older management plan. Alex recommends a two year contract, so prospective forestry companies have a good window of time to complete the work. The invasive work would be done before the forestry. It can create a cash flow problem because you pay for the invasive removal before you get funds from forestry. Steven found previous discussions on other forests including the Great Brook forest which we might like a rapid assessment on. Peter asked for Alex's opinion on the Emerald Ash borer. Alex is not preemptively removing all ash trees in anticipation of them becoming infected. He recommends removing problem trees around roadways, buildings, etc. Peggy noted we have a good rate with Rice Tree Removal. Peggy asked if we have any ash trees around town. Peter noted we do, but we don't have a town wide tree survey. It would be a good thing to have but could be expensive and time consuming. Alex recommends removal around roadways and important public spaces, but to let them be in the forests. Steven found further correspondence and noted there are 9 forests on our list. WCC to send list to Alex.

2. Barry 4-H Conservation Camp: they would like to know who is being recommended and which camp they would like to go to. John has sent it on to the school.

Old Business:

1. Pollinator Garden: Alicia forwarded copies of some plans Jeffry has done. Jeffry emailed asking for a follow-up. Alicia also noted that Pete's Stands has asked about growing produce in the upper and possibly lower fields. It would be kept organic. He knows he would have to pay taxes and would like to know what the taxes would be. Peggy said to contact Sarah and she will ask Avitar. John said that it would be nice to ask the fundraising committee for their input on the use of the property. France is concerned about commercial agricultural use and its adherence to the spirit of the agreement. Peter noted that the original push was to protect the land as it was, and it was used as commercial agricultural. He mentioned the WCC is tasked with determining what the use of the land will be. Steven noted that it is not required that we get input from donors or the townspeople, but that it is a nice gesture. He also thought that whatever is done, it not be a permanent use, so it could be used as something else for the future. Kelli asked if we have to decide on one thing, or could we have multiple uses. A pollinator garden and a community garden, for example. Steven noted that if we don't do plantings and we just use seed for the pollinator garden, we don't have to make a decision right away. Laura mentioned that Jeffry's expense would be much less if we went with seed and didn't do a formal planted plan. Alicia

summarized that whatever we do, we would like no commercial agriculture, zero maintenance and have the property open to change the use in the future. Alicia will write a Clarion article to solicit public input and relay what we have been discussing. Peter disagrees with the exemption of commercial agriculture and believes that it would be beneficial to farmers and the town of Walpole. Alicia asked how we would select a farmer and is worried about picking favorites. What type of metrics would we specify for the farming regulations. Steven asked if we could allow farming in the large lower field but have a more public use for the upper field. Alicia will work on the article. Lew mentioned the kiosk and needing material to put into it.

2. Harold Putnam Memorial: Lew mentioned the bench is in. He will send pictures. He would like to contact the family and organize a gathering. The bench is down by the dam.
3. Easement Property List: Steven printed out the complete list, but Laura noted a smaller list of properties in an email. There are only four in the email, but she is not sure if there are others that she doesn't know about, like the Tucker Burr agreement. We are supposed to monitor it and report to ourselves. Steven asked if we should be adding town forests that aren't in easement but still should be monitored. Mill Pond, for example, needs reports submitted to the State of NH for LCHIP. Laura thinks it's a good idea to walk all our properties. Alicia noted the spreadsheet still needs work, and maybe we get a small group together to work on it.
4. Town Website: Kelli noted that she will get in touch with Ryan, let him know what we want, and they would get it done. Alicia has some items that can be added that she sent already.
5. Reservoir Dam: John got an estimate from Fuzzy Brothers for the liner. Price for the pipe, install, rip rap for the outlet and reseeding and mulching is \$38,000 even. The Forestry account has about \$36,000. John also noted that our contact with the engineering firm Fuss & O'Neill does not work with them anymore. A meeting is going to be setup with the town and the firm to meet the new contact. John mentions we also need to determine if Fuss & O'Neill is doing the permitting. John will discuss all this with Mark. Peggy noted that the town got some money from the state and they had a public hearing on what to do with the money. No one attended. They are putting it into an account for future needs. She has notified the selectboard that the WCC will not have enough money for the dam project. She asked John to write a letter or memo to the selectboard requesting assistance. France made a motion and Laura seconded to proceed with the lining of the culvert in the amount of \$38,000. John will forward any information he gets as things proceed.
6. Mill Pond Trail Work: tree is still there.
7. Membership: waiting for word on Duncan's membership.

Other Business:

1. Walpole Gateway Kiosk: Lew will send an invoice for the materials. It came in under the already approved amount. The funds will come from the Walker Road Account.

Adjournment: At 9:31 Steven made a motion to adjourn the meeting. France seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 2, 2019 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted; Steven Dumont, Recording Secretary

Note: These are unapproved minutes. Corrections, if any, will be found in the minutes of December 2, 2019.