

**Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the
Walpole Conservation Commission
March 2, 2020**

Members Present: Alicia Flammia, John Peska, Jackie Kensen, France Menk, Lewis Shelley, Laura Hayes, Steven Dumont, Cheryl Mayberry, Selectboard Representative, Jean Kobeski, Recording Secretary

Members Absent: None

Alternates Present: Myra Mansouri, Duncan Watson

Guests: Alex Barrett, Sam Locke

Call to Order: Alicia called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Steven moved: John seconded, and all approved the minutes of February 3, 2020, as corrected.

Public Business

Treasury Report: Conservation Account \$142,508.34
Forestry Account \$35,328.08
Walker Road Account \$3,554.38

Correspondence: Grant from the Robert Hubbard Conservation Commission Fund of the NH Charitable Foundation is \$9,150.64.

New Business

Alex Barrett of Long View Forest Management gave an update on rapid assessments. He has completed 8 (combined March and Nelson); Bertin Forest remains to be done. Lew asked when he thought he might complete that. Alex said ASAP, perhaps within a week. On his written report Alex stated he has 19.75 hours to be invoiced (\$1,481), but he did not have the invoice with him.

Alex presented a Rapid Assessment Results Summary (2018-2020) chart, which listed proposed activities in each forest, a recommended a year in which to do the work, the level of priority, whether each was an investment or revenue source, and scale of cost. He defined Small scale as less than \$1,000, Medium as \$1,000 - \$10,000, and Large as over \$10,000.

Duncan asked which invasive species Alex spotted the most. He said Glossy Buckthorn, Oriental Bittersweet, and Barberry. Alex recommends the use of herbicides, in particular, glyphosate. He said bushwhacking and mowing are ineffective. He said that the invasive plants can be cut back, then when they start to grow back, the herbicide can be applied. July - September is the best time to apply herbicides. France asked how the herbicide will affect birds that eat the berries and leaves of plants to which the herbicide has been applied. Alicia stated that glyphosate, which is carefully controlled, can be very effective, and it is one of the most benign herbicides. Duncan expressed concern about pollinators and proposed that the group stipulate that no herbicide harmful to pollinators be used.

After reviewing suggested activities on Alex's chart, Alicia said that the group could repaint property line blazes in 2020. Jackie, Steven, and France expressed interest in doing this and will discuss it. Steven said it is best to paint the new markers under the old to retain proof of the original property line.

Steven asked Alex to tell the group what should be done first. Alex answered Mason Forest and the Watershed. He suggested investing money to harvest timber in the Watershed then use some of the money made from the harvest to work on Fanny Mason. He also said that invasives in the Hooper and Watershed could be harvested this winter. Alex would need to know within the month if that is going to be done.

Alicia asked if Alex saw any place that needs tree planting. Alex stated that none of these forests need trees. He did suggest underplanting, planting a diversity of shrubs, to knock out buckthorn. Both Alex and Laura suggested various shrubs that would be appropriate for this purpose. Laura also suggested planting shrubs by the memorial at the Great Brook roadside.

Steven suggested creating a map identifying trees in town. Laura and Alex suggested using I-Naturalist to do this. Helen Dalback of the Hooper Institute said that 70% of the trees are Norway Maples.

Laura suggested giving Mike Rau a crash course in identifying trees that need to be cut down. John said that would be unnecessary because the town, Liberty Utilities, and Asplundh locate these each fall.

Alicia reported that Ray Boas presented his tree planting idea to the Selectboard and received their approval. He will head the effort to plant one mature tree in town each Old Home Day.

Lew reported that he has scheduled a trail building workshop with Distant Hill Gardens around May 23rd.

Old Business

The wetlands and streams subcommittee is taking a look at wetlands to see what was done in 2005. If they can get some designated as prime wetlands, the NH DES will then take them over. Steven said that, at the present, there is no residential setback site plan review for the zoning board.

Lew reported that he is starting to create trail maps for the Walker Road Kiosk. He stated the Leave No Trace sign is in place, but they need to get a No Fires and No Camping in place, as well.

France printed out the survey responses she received. Members can access the list on Google Docs. It was suggested that the survey be mentioned in the Clarion again next month.

John reported that the selectboard met with Fuss and O'Neill, who will do the permit work for the DEA. The next step is to determine the depth of the reservoir. John will talk to Mark about

doing that. Once done, the information will be sent to Fuss and O'Neill, who will then apply for the permit for the culvert work.

Sam Locke of the CRJC and Cold River Local Advisory Committee attended the meeting to learn more about the WCC and determine in what ways the groups could collaborate. Perhaps they could do joint fundraising and education. John suggested she look into Trout Unlimited for new funding for the Cold River.

Other Business

Lew showed some sample maps he has created of the Mill Pond. He also reported that there is a huge washout near the causeway with a massive silt deposit.

Lew is starting to make trail signs. He reported that he believes the Champion Black Oak fell. He will confirm that then notify Steven, who will contact the signmaker.

Lew said there is work being done on the pond below the Hooper Golf Course. This work must have Houghton's permission because the golf course can draw down just a certain amount of water. The rest is reserved for the fire department.

Steven proposed that the commission discuss and act on Alex's rapid assessments and priorities at the next meeting. Alicia suggested planning another trail maintenance.

Jackie wanted to know if she should talk to the Gowdys about haying. It was decided she should have them sign a maintenance agreement.

John asked if there is a color-coded system for trails in Walpole. Lew said no. He suggested using colored tags rather than painting trail markers. Lew will price out tags for the next meeting.

John moved; Laura seconded, and all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

The next meeting is Monday, April 6, at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Kobeski, Recording Secretary

*** These minutes are in draft form until approved by the Commission on April 6.