

**Conservation Commission Meeting  
Public Minutes  
February 7, 2024**

**Members Present:** Becky Dunham (Chair), Bob Stephens (Vice Chair), Andy Laroche, Lise McNaughton, Matt Lipinski (Secretary), Andy Artimovich (Selectboard Rep), Doug Cowie (Alternate), Michelle Siudut (Alternate), Patrick Marcoux (Alternate), Rob Wofchuck (Alternate). Absent: Brian Silva

Chairman Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and welcomed new Alternate Members Marcoux and Wofchuck. Motion by Dunham, second by Lipinski, to designate Cowie a voting member for this meeting. Unanimously approved.

**Agenda Items**

1. **Minutes Review:** Review of the draft Minutes from the January 10, 2024 Commission meeting. Some minor spelling corrections were noted. Upon motion by Cowie and second by McNaughton, the corrected minutes were approved 6-0, with Lipinski abstaining.
2. **Bills & Reimbursements:** None.
3. **Correspondence & Notices:** Dunham advised Planning Board reviewed the R.E. Prescott development plan and gave it a 2-year approval. Other Planning Board actions were reported, including information on water-related grants which are available. She also reported that Doug Finan was here and will be attending our meetings as the Planning Board rep going forward; Dunham will attend Planning Board as the Conservation Commission's rep.
4. **Old Business**
  - a. **Town Boundaries:** Lipinski reported that he followed up with Phil Coombs, Kingston DPW Director, and agreed they would continue the process once the snow melts. Stephens is continuing to follow up with Exeter to schedule a review meeting.
  - b. **Alternates:** As previously noted, the Selectboard recently approved Patrick Marcoux and Rob Wofchuck as Alternates to fill open Commission vacancies.
  - c. **Pickpocket Dam Removal:** Dunham made available copies of the Seacoast Online article about public reaction to potential dam removal. Bruce Stevens advised of an upcoming town hall about the topic.
  - d. **Consultant:** McNaughton and Dunham will be interviewing consultant candidate Anna Boudreau on February 16, 2024.

- e. **Conservation Manual Review:** Lipinski reported that he has begun the review and estimated he would have revision recommendations ready in the next couple of months.
- f. **Forest Management Capital Reserve Fund:** The Trustees of the Trust Fund are reviewing information provided by Dunham and will advise the Selectboard of any recommended actions.

## 5. Prospective Conservation status/updates (non-public as needed under the law)

- a. Fuller Property: Due diligence is currently being completed.
- b. Spead Property: McNaughton prepared a draft letter advising the property owner that no financial assistance is being recommended by the Commission in order to transition this property into conservation, and if the owner wished to donate the property to the Town, the preferred instrument is a quitclaim deed.
- c. Swasey Property: A second meeting with SELT recently occurred which was attended by Dunham, McNaughton, Dexter and Charlton Swasey, and the SELT representative. As a result of that meeting, conservation of this property has been paused while the Swaseys consider their various options.
- d. Tremallo Property: McNaughton prepared a draft letter advising the property owner that no financial assistance is being recommended by the Commission in order to transition this property into conservation. Because the parcel is small and potentially unbuildable, funding is not justified. It is uncertain whether and how the owner will wish to proceed at this point.

## 6. New Business

- a. **Outreach to landowners:** Efforts continue to reach out to landowners with potentially conservable properties in Brentwood. The existing list of such properties, possibly from as long ago as 2003, needs updating. Dunham and McNaughton recommended a subcommittee be formed to complete the update. Commission Alternates Marcoux and Wofchuck volunteered to be part of that subcommittee, as did residents Joyce Keegal and Liz Faria. Wofchuck recommended other long-term residents who know a lot of people in Town be contacted to join this subcommittee (e.g., Ward Byrne). It is expected the subcommittee's efforts will launch in April.
- b. **Annual Spring Cleanup:** Dunham proposed forming a group to organize it. Cowie volunteered and others will be recruited by Dunham. Event is tentatively planned for April 20, 2024, with a rain date of April 27. Wofchuck recommended inviting the local Boy and Girl Scouts troops to participate.

- c. **Conservation Commission Facebook Page:** Dunham advised that Marcoux has volunteered to be the Commission's Facebook page administrator. Dunham will obtain necessary IDs for access.
- d. **Cemetery Superintendent Update:** Joyce Keegal presented an update on cemetery lot availability and expected consumption pace of the remaining existing plots. She advised that based on current sale-of-plots trends, we are 2-4 years away from needing additional cemetery land, and that the current Section 5 of Tonry Cemetery will be full in a maximum of 9 years. She encouraged the Commission to continue seeking land acquisition opportunities for use as cemeteries and to continue communicating with her regarding any progress.
- e. **Education and Training Opportunities:** Various materials were circulated regarding educational opportunities relating to conservation topics. All Commissioners were encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. Discussion ensued regarding having subject matter experts present conservation training on topics of interest at future Commission meetings. The consensus was to have such presentations every other month at the start of the meetings. Wofchuck and Liz Faria will team on planning efforts.

#### **7. Other Business:**

Dunham advised that the Selectboard recently approved and signed live-trapping permits to reduce beaver activity at Middle and Bartlett Roads. Dunham also advised of a recent change in hunting regulations requiring owners' names to be affixed to game cameras on private lands. Discussion ensued about a similar existing requirement for tree stands. It was suggested we post the new/updated regulations on the Commission Facebook page.

A Commission Income and Expense summary for 2023 was distributed and reviewed by Dunham.

Siudut inquired regarding a potentially needed date correction in the January minutes for the Public Hearing in Exeter regarding the Pickpocket Dam removal. Upon motion by Lipinski, second by Cowie, the Commission unanimously approved reopening the January minutes to make that correction.

Upon motion by Cowie, second by Lipinski, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm.