

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Public Minutes
December 13, 2023**

Members Present: Becky Dunham (Chair), Bob Stephens (Vice Chair), Andy Laroche, Brian Silva, Matt Lipinski (Secretary), Andy Artimovich (Selectboard Rep), Doug Cowie (Alternate), Michelle Siudut (Alternate).

Chairman Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Motion by Laroche, second by Artimovich, to designate Cowie a voting member for this meeting. Unanimously approved.

Agenda Items

1. **Minutes Review:** Review of the draft Minutes from the November 8, 2023 Commission meeting. Upon motion by Cowie and second by Silva, the minutes were unanimously approved.
2. **Bills & Reimbursements:**
Invoice received for annual dues of \$200 to Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Laroche and second by Cowie, payment of the bill was unanimously approved. It was also recommended the Chair request regular reporting from that Committee.
3. **Correspondence & Notices:**
A minor impact permit was approved by NHDES for the property identified on Tax Map 217, Lot 27.

An inquiry was received from a Spruce Ridge resident about the planned Pickpocket Dam removal. Dunham referred them to the Friends of Exeter River Group.

Notice received that the Trails capacity grant application period is now open.

DES is monitoring wetlands progress on property at Tax Map 209, Lot 10, which it has approved thus far.

4. Old Business

- a. **Town Boundaries:** Lipinski reported that he met with Phil Coombs, Kingston DPW Director, and they started the process. After identifying two boundary points, they agreed to reconvene after the first of the year to complete the rest. Lipinski also reported that he spoke with Wayne Robinson, who agreed to accompany them to identify the boundaries. Artimovich reported that Fremont has been completed and filed. Stephens is continuing to follow up with Exeter to schedule a review meeting.

- b. **Alternates:** Dunham reported that Jessica Balukas has stepped down. Three applications have been submitted for the two open Alternates positions. Following discussion of the candidate submissions, the Committee voted to recommend that Selectboard approve Jim Hajjar and Patrick Marcoux for the open roles.
- c. **2024 Budget:** Dunham submitted the Commission's proposed 2024 budget of \$12,703. The Budget Committee approved that amount, pending answers to some questions, which Dunham then provided to Siudut, who advised she shall convey those answers to the Budget Committee.
- d. **Pickpocket Dam Removal:** Dunham distributed copies of the letter that was sent by Karen Clement, Brentwood Town Administrator, to the Exeter Town Manager. The Exeter River Committee will meet and discuss its contents. The Commission had also requested follow-up with the NH Dam Bureau regarding their opinion on the application to remove the dam.
- e. **Advisory Roles:** Discussion occurred about a representative to the River Committee. We also need a Planning Board rep. Dunham advised she will attend Planning Board meetings for now and eventually appoint someone.
- f. **Easement Monitoring:** McNaughton has consolidated a master list of conservation easement properties in Brentwood, copies of which were distributed to Commission members by Dunham. Easement monitoring is 75% complete. The remainder should be finished in the coming weeks.
- g. **Consultant:** The position description is being drafted and is almost complete. The Consultant candidate previously identified by former Commission Chairman, Mark Young, will be interviewed and if retained, will be used on an as-needed basis.

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

- a. Fuller Property: Nothing new to report since last meeting.
- b. Spead Property: The owner of a ¼-acre property has offered it for conservation on the condition that it remains open, undeveloped space in perpetuity. McNaughton contacted Glen Greenwood for guidance on the best conveyance option to pursue. The consensus was a gift to the Town via quitclaim deed may be optimal.
- c. Swasey Property: Dunham reported she and SELT met with the Swaseys yesterday to discuss potential easement terms. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2024 in order to continue that discussion.
- d. Tremallo Property: See McNaughton summary of December 12, 2023. Matter is tabled until the next meeting so McNaughton can discuss the details with the Commission.

e. Webb Property: Dunham will submit questions to the Selectboard via Artimovich regarding whether it wishes to pursue conservation of this property. Upon receiving its determination, a meeting with Mrs. Webb to discuss potential easement terms, interests, etc., may be arranged.

6. **Forest Management Capital Reserve Fund**: We have been asked whether we wish to keep the fund in place since it hasn't been used in five years. Dunham referred the matter to the Trustees of the Trust Fund.

7. Other Business:

A possible error in the October meeting minutes was reported; Dunham and Lipinski will review and advise.

Discussion occurred regarding possible removal of a fence from the **Stevens property in conservation [Becky – is this correct?]** which was erected by a prior lessee. It was suggested we may wish to contact the prior lessee about removing it. Stephens recommended the Town send him a letter asking whether he wants the fence or will remove it, and give him 30 days to respond.

Upon motion by Cowie, second by Silva, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.