

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission - Public Meeting Minutes
Wednesday December 11, 2013
6:30PM
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dave Connolly (Chairman), Scott Kobbe, Randy Orvis, Richard Ballou, Tyler Smith, Jim Horgan (Selectmen's Representative)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Dave called meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance @6:36 PM

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dave asked if there was any Public Comment and there was none. Rodney was the only public present.

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

• **Public Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2013**

MOTION: Randy motioned to approve Public Meeting Minutes as presented.

SECOND: Jim

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

• **Non-Public Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2013**

MOTION: Jim motioned to approve Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented.

SECOND: Randy

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

4. FYI - 2014 MEETING SCHEDULE:

Dave stated that the Conservation Commission will meet on the 2nd Wednesday for each month at 6:30 PM. Randy stated except for the March meeting, which will be held on the 3rd Wednesday. Dave stated that is correct.

5. 2013 TOWN REPORT REVIEW:

Dave asked the Commission to review the proposed 2014 Town Report and added that there were copies up front for the Public to view. A few corrections were noted and Randy asked if we needed a motion to approve. Dave stated that is what they have done in the past.

MOTION: Randy motion to approve the Town Report as amended.

SECOND: Jim

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

Dave stated that the Public Hearing is scheduled for 7:00 PM so they have to wait until then to start. He then introduced that new Recording Secretary, Debra Cantwell.

MOTION: Dave motioned to move the meeting down to agenda item #10 – Old Business.

SECOND: Jim

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

Kiosks

- Dave stated that the kiosks are in and being stored at the Town Garage. He added that he sent out several quote requests and only received one back. He added that because the quote for all bids is over \$1,000 we will need to go out to bid. Discussion took place requiring what the bids included. Dave asked if they wanted him to request a RFP for the cost and all agreed that should be done.

MOTION: Jim motioned to let Dave request the RFP.

SECOND: Richard

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes

- Dave stated that Scot has gotten us some information about stains options for the kiosks and we need to figure out how much we need. Scott explained that the prices vary and are available in 1 or 5 gallon sizes. He added that each gallon will cover about 200 square feet and we can choose from 8 different of colors and transparencies. Discussions took place and it was decided that they would need about 200 sq. feet per coat. Jim asked if Scott knew what the shelf life was because that could make a difference in the amount we order. Scott stated that he would check into that. It was agreed that at least 2 gallons would be needed.

Dave asked about the yellow Rustoleum paint and Scott stated that the wholesale cost was \$7.72 which is what he can get it for and the retail is \$11.00 per quart. Dave stated that Jason mentioned to him that the Abbott sign also needs to be replaced. Discussions continued about colors and all members agreed on brown with yellow. Scott stated that the cost of the stain is \$18.72 a gallon and Jim asked if that included shipping. Scott said there was no shipping cost and Dave added that 2 gallons of stain and the quart of yellow would be just over \$45.00. Jim suggested that we set the amount to exceed \$75.00 since we are going to need brushes and other supplies.

MOTION: Jim motioned to expend up to \$75.00 to purchase stain, paint, brushes and supplies for the purpose of the kiosks.

SECOND: Randy

DISCUSSION: Dave said that he would like to do a friendly amendment to add that member Scott Kobbe will do the purchasing of the products. All members were in agreement.

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes as amended.

State Conservation Committee Grant Update

- Dave stated that the grant that we applied for to help with the French property in the amount of \$7,480 was not approved. Dave read the comments that were added which stated some of the

reasons why we were denied. He added the next application due date is September 2014 and they have offered to help us to prepare for that application if we want. Jim asked where the Grant money came from and Dave stated that it was funded from the Moose plate project. Jim asked who we could talk to at the State Conservation Committee level and Dave stated Mr. Richard Wood. Jim stated that he would like to see if we can get some assistance from them and would like to invite Mr. Wood to a Conservation Commission meeting. All agreed that was a good idea and Dave added that this was the first time we applied for a grant so we're learning from this experience.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

- Jim asked when did we learn about the Berry 4H camp last year and Scott answered that it was around February, and we started that application process last April. Jim suggested that we start to make contact with the school right after the first of the year and all agreed. Scott added that he thinks the contact they had last year is no longer there. Jim stated that is even more of a reason to start early and he is anticipating that after the buzz from last year they will see more applications for the program.
- Jim asked if we are going to do something for Arbor and Earth Day. Dave asked the members what they would like to do and added some of the things that have been done in the past. Jim stated that Earth day is the 22nd and Arbor Day is the 26th. Dave said he was thinking of doing a community clean-up day the weekend before Earth Day. Jim stated that means we will need contributors and organizers for the events so we should start as soon as possible. Dave asked if there was any other new business and there was none.

MOTION: At 6:58 PM Dave motioned to take a 5 minute recess before the start of the Public Hearing.

SECOND: Jim

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

8. PUBLIC HEARING @ 7PM:

At 7:04 PM Dave state that the Public Hearing was now open to discuss the purchase of property located off Bay Road, Property Tax Map R62-2, known as the Lawrence property for conservation purposes. Dave introduced Jason Lyle as the Land Manager and Forester representing the Lawrence's. Dave stated that they have been in negotiations and pointed out the benefits of acquiring this property for conservation purposes. Dave stated that the original offer was for \$60,000 however based on the appraisal they are planning to offer the Lawrence's \$50,000, and added that the value based on the appraisal was a surprise to everyone. Jim pointed to the property on the map. Dave described the areas around this land and stated that what they are looking to purchase is about 46 acres.

Dave asked if any of the members has any questions and Randy asked if there were any restrictions on the deed because he knew there were restrictions on the adjacent property to not allow wheeled vehicles. He also added that Dave and him have talked about having a conservation cabin somewhere and was just wondering if there are any restrictions against this. Dave and Mr. Lyle stated that they were not aware of any. Dave added that he wanted to point out that this is the first property we are actually purchasing so we have a little more control, which is why the other properties may have some restrictions. He added that we are only buying this property for

conservation purposes and asked Mr. Lyle if they wanted that included in the sales agreement. Mr. Lyle said there was no need for that and Randy stated that not adding any other restrictions will leave options for us. Dave added that he is thinking that down the road they could put all 5 properties into official conservation easement.

Dave asked if there was any more questions or if the public had any comments and there was none. Dave told Mr. Lyle that legal had a few questions and stated that they need to know the exact names and addresses of both properties owners. He also asked that once the sales agreement is written up, should it be sent to him. Mr. Lyle answered yes and Dave said that he would then need Mr. Lyle's contact information. Dave stated that the closing date was another question legal had and wondered if mid-February was ok for closing. Mr. Lyle stated the sooner the better and asked if it was possible to close by end of January. Dave stated absolutely he could do that if all the paperwork is done. Mr. Lyle asked if all the paper is done around the 15th is it just a matter of the Town signing off and if so, can it be done at that time. Dave said he thinks they can do that and Randy asked if we needed a motion. Jim stated he had a motion as soon as Dave we close the public hearing. Dave closed the public hearing at 7:22 PM.

MOTION: Jim motioned to authorize the expense of \$50,000.00 plus closing costs to purchase the Lawrence property located at Property Tax Map R62-2 and for this expense to be taking from Current Use Fund upon completion of the appropriated documentation.

SECOND: Randy

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

9. SRC/HUPPE:

Dave introduced Anna Boudreau from the Strafford River Conservancy and Tim Huppe. Anna stated that she was here to discuss the easement at 410 Meaderboro Road and she would like to focus on the estimated budget. Anna said the good news was that she heard from DES at the end of November and explained that she had requested \$100,000 from them for this project and they approved \$75,000 with some contingencies. She added that the total budget for the project is estimated at \$106,000.

Anna explained that she sent Dave the invoice for the appraisal and she needed to get a copy of that. Dave stated that it was turned over to their Finance person, Pam and he would get her a copy. Ms. Boudreau stated that the appraisal was \$2400. Jim said that he thinks they put in \$3800 and Anna stated that the amount may still be needed for an updated appraisal. Anna listed some of the contingencies and added that when she looks at the updated budget she has concerns because the survey is part of the largest cost. Dave suggested that maybe Randy could provide some assistance with the survey and Randy explained that they have done the building and the boundaries by the road already.

Anna stated that she thought she would budget \$11,500 for the survey and thought that amount was a good baseline based on other surveys in the past. Randy stated that he will need to know now if the boundary survey is for the entire parcel and exclude what is not going to be included. He added that they were not thinking about the easement as being an option at the time they did the survey. Anna suggested that maybe she and Randy could go together.

Anna stated that she has estimated the total cost at \$106,945 and will not know the accurate amount until she sees the actual cost of the survey. She added that once she received the committed from DES for \$75,000, she contacted Rochester Public Works in hopes of getting some money to help, but unfortunately they will not be able to assist since they currently don't have the resources for their own projects now. Anna added that PREP might be available and would contact them once we have a closing date set. She added the last time she checked with PREP they told her to check back in January, which she did this week, however no one was available. She said they received \$4000 from PREP last time and she would check back with them in January. She also stated that she has a private donor that she may be able to ask for the assistance if we fall short, however she current doesn't know that amount and what this committee is willing to provide.

Anna stated she met with the Huppe's last month and they would like to close soon. Dave state that a few months ago we talked about the appraisal being budgeted for \$3800 and it was actually only \$2400 so he wondered if the difference of \$1400 should come off the bottom line. Anna stated that she would like to leave that in there because sometimes a Federal grant requires a more robust appraisal or an update to the current one. She added that at this time she was not anticipating that happening but would still like to leave the \$1400 in the budget just in case. Jim asked how large the property was and Anna stated that it was just less than 100 acres minus what will be taking out leaving approximately 90 acres. Anna stated that the current outstanding balance is \$39,145 and if we didn't get any other sources, she would like to suggest that the Commission vote to fund up to \$39,145.00. She added that they would like to close in March and if she had to come back and request more money from the Commission it would extend this another 3 months. She then asked if there were any questions.

Jim asked what the requirement was to get the \$75,000 and Anna stated that the funds are in place, what we are added, and that it is in an appropriate target fund, and proof of the commitments. Jim asked if \$31,945.80 was what she was looking for and she answered yes. Jim stated that he had a problem with the amount of that request due to the account balance they currently have and suggested that the Commission commit to \$15,000. Dave stated he has to echo Jim's comments and agrees to up to \$15,000 due to balance in the funds and other projects we have going on. He added that he likes to keep the balance at a certain level or we will not be able to do anything for a while unless the housing business picks up. Anna stated that she understands, but is disappointed given the nature of the project, plus it could take a few years to expend. She added that she was hoping to not have to ask for so much from the donor, and it would help if she could say that the Conservation Committee committed to up to \$30,000, people would be more likely to contribute. Jim stated that with the \$3,800 we have already committed and another \$15,000 that would be \$18,800 we are committing to if we motion to approve the \$15,000 tonight.

Randy stated that he could maybe help on the survey budget and thinks we can come under the budgeted amount. Scott asked what is keeping us from doing more and Dave stated the balance in the conservation fund. He added that he is trying to keep it at a certain level and not below that is what is keeping us, however after doing more math, he would be open to go up to \$20,000 and still be comfortable where we need to be. Anne stated that is more in line in what they were hoping for. Jim asked Dave is he was comfortable with that amount and Dave said that he was.

MOTION: Jim motioned to authorize to put forth another \$20,000 towards this project.

SECOND: Scott

DISCUSSION: Jim stated that it is not his attention to fund the whole project but is willing to put up to \$20,000 towards it plus the addition of the \$3800 they have already committed.

VOTE: Randy abstained - All others in favor. Motion passes.

Anna thanked the commission and stated that at this time she will go back again and will try to find some money. She left Dave with the documentation she has received for his reference and added that she will have an updated budget in January. She asked if it was possible to schedule the public hearing for January in hopes they can vote for it and just to keep this going. Randy stated that if we want to get it approved this year we need to do it in January. There was discussion about when the BOS will meet in January and Dave suggested that Anna email Keith, the Town Administrator for the correct date and he said he would too. Dave added that our legal council will need to look over the agreement. Anna stated that in the meantime she will work on the deed which takes a little while and will send Dave a copy when it is done. Randy asked if the stone wall boundaries can be found in the snow and she stated yes. Anna stated that she is so excited for this project and Dave added that it is a wonder project and we could do more, but things are tight with all we are trying to do. Everyone thanked Anna and Mr. Huppe for their time.

10. NHACC/NICHOLAS COATES:

Dave stated that Richard, Jim and I met Nick at a NHACC Meet & Greet and they have asked Nick to come here and talk about NHACC and what they can do for us. Nick stated that NHACC is a nonprofit organization that helps Conservation Commissions do their work as well as help in providing tech service. Jim asked what are the tech services and Nick stated that it includes helping with grants, writing letters as well as other services as needed. He added that we will also keep you updated on what is going on in Concord. Jim asked does the NHACC actually get involved and Nick stated yes and described some of the things they are involved in at the state level. Nick added that they never ask for you to take a position, we will respect any position you take and whether you want to take part in something or not. Jim asked what kind of help they can get with grant writing and Nick stated that they can help by reviewing forms, answer questions, and point you into the right direction. Nick added that NHACC has a newsletter published every other month that talks about grants and other items of importance so that you don't have to chase them down.

Nick added that another thing they do is to make sure we are kept up to date on NRI (Natural Resource Inventory), conservation plans, and review of land use tax as well as answer questions that may come up. Dave stated that the Commission talked about a membership before, but never acted upon it, and then asked what does a membership cost. Nick stated the rate is based on population and equalized asset values and should be about \$275 - \$300 for us. He added that members get the newsletter and all benefits to their services. Nick stated that he will get the exact amount of the membership as a follow up and will leave some documentation for review. Jim asked what happens to the funds for membership, and Nick responded that it pays for meeting like this, lobby at the State House, and other operations expenses. Dave stated that just getting the help with grants is worth it. Nick stated that they currently represent 180 of the approximate 200 communities in the state and the goal is to get all of them. Jim stated that he is not ready to make a motion without knowing the exact amount and Nick stated that he will get that to us. Randy mentioned he thinks we have a discount and Nick stated that is true and we will get it.

Discussion continued with the Commission noting that we have a high school student on the board which has been very helpful in expiring youngsters, and we have issues with dumping. Nick left

packets of information for the members and Dave asked him to email him the docs so that he had them and to also forward the invoice. Nick stated that he would. All members thanked him for his time.

11. FYI:

• **Intent to Cut**

Randy stated that they have received 2 Intend to Cut Requests at Property Tax Map R-50 lot 44 and the second was R-4 lots 11 & 13.

• **NH Association of Natural Resources Scientists**

Dave stated that they are holding a meeting tomorrow at the NH Race Way in Loudon and there are also offering Wetland Classification Workshop. The fee is \$75.00 for non-members and includes a pizza lunch. Dave added that he has all the information and if anyone is interested to contact him.

• **Encumbrance Concerning the Budget**

Jim asked if we are square with invoices and Dave said we are not and Jim told Dave where the paper work is. Dave stated that he does not see anything of concern with the operation budget. Randy stated that we should not have any hold over and Jim added that the kiosks have come from the big fund. Dave stated that not including the secretary wages, the Conservation Commission budget was \$3900. Jim asked if we needed any SD cards or batteries and Dave stated that we spent about \$250 last past year. Randy stated that we had a good return. Dave stated that RFP's average about \$100 each. Randy stated that if we RFP now it will come out of next year's budget because we will not even entertain it until then. Randy asked if we needed more cameras set up and Dave stated no we should be all set.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Dave stated that the next Conservation Commission Meeting will be January 8th. At 6:30 PM. He added that the commission currently has open seats and if anyone is interested please see Megan in the Town Office.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: At 8:28 PM, Jim motioned to adjourn.

SECOND: Randy

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

The Conservation Commission Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Debra Cantwell, Recording Secretary