

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of Meeting of May 1, 2017

Present Members: Catherine Fisher, Antoinette Hartgerink, Bill Humm (Chair), David Meeker, Anne Tappan

Alternate Members: Amanda Gourgue

Ex Officio: Scott Bugbee, Select Board Representative

Visitors: John Hutton, Tobin Farwell, Dustin Morrill, Barbara Wauchope

Approval of Previous Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on April 3, 2017, approved as written.

Updates and Announcements:

LCC Bank Balance: The balance in the LCC account as of April 30, 2017, was \$ composed of

LCC Funds	\$
Dave Allan Fund	\$

Signage at Oyster River Crossing: B. Humm reported that the NHDOT and the Select Board have approved the installation of the “Protected River” sign prepared by the Oyster River Watershed Association. Randy Stevens will see that the signs are installed.

Potential Lee Newsletter: S. Bugbee, D. Meeker, and A. Gourgue summarized the discussion at the meeting April 26 and noted that a second meeting is planned for May 24.

Facilities Committee: S. Bugbee and D. Meeker summarized the status of the Committee’s activities.

Natural Resource Concerns: B. Humm reported that he received a letter from Alena Warren, Manager of the Strafford County Conservation District, informing him of a Local Workgroup Meeting to be held at the Jeremiah Smith Grange in Lee at 3pm on May 17. The goal of the meeting is the identification of the County’s most important natural resource concerns.

Easement Monitoring: In April members visited the Rick Stevens, Randy Stevens, Kelsey, and Short easements and the Garrity Reserve. The only issue of concern found is a slight incursion by an abutter on the south boundary of the Reserve. In May the easements of Aldag (5/3), Barth and Crosbie (5/10), Jenkins (5/17), Sanborn (5/24), and Grumbling (5/31) will be visited. B. Humm noted that the property containing the Palmer easement has been sold.

Education/Outreach: B. Humm presented a brochure from SPNHF describing the easement walks they plan for the coming summer. The **walk in the Lee Town Forest** is scheduled for August 5. C. Fisher reported that the **Frog Walks** were successful despite the presence of a cold rain and the absence of frogs. A **Woodcock Walk** will be held at Little River Park at 7:30 pm on May 12.

Conservation Lands Management: A. Tappan reported that the work of woodcock habitat management at **Mills Little River Park** has gone very well through the help of Don Quigley, Matt Tarr, their UNH students, and deserts by C. Fisher. She said that considerable improvement in the habitat has been accomplished and she will prepare a report on the project for the Select Board. A. Tappan reported on the response of the Select Board to the request by Barrington’s Trail Scouts for a campfire on **Little River Park** using gathered firewood. She informed the Board that all wood in the forest harbors life and that, while one campfire is not going to be of significant concern, a policy permitting such activities could be detrimental to the Park. The Select Board asked her to suggest a policy for campfires on Town property. She, as a representative of the Commission, will develop a policy. The Trail Scouts agreed to bring their own wood for their campfire. This, however, suggested another possible problem since “imported” wood has the possibility of containing invasive insect species. Anne will consider various informational sources as she develops the policy recommendations. C. Fisher reported that plans for the project and its publicity for the **removal of trash from the Town Forest** are progressing. B. Humm suggested that the abutter to **Old Mill Reserve** who has contacted the Commission concerning trail development and maintenance should be invited to participate in the monitoring visit to the Reserve. A. Hartgerink stated that she did not feel that the site is really appropriate for large scale public usage. C. Fisher agreed with her assessment. The 2017 Service Palooza of Oyster River Middle School is scheduled for the **James Farm** property on Thursday, May 11, 8:45 to 11:30 am. Humm stated that it would be helpful if members of the

Commission would identify sites where the invasive barberry is abundant before the students arrive to attack the invasive plant. He and C. Fisher plan on visiting the site on May 2.

OLD BUSINESS:

Trail Mapping: B. Humm has discussed the Commission’s concern for an app, “Map My Hike”, with Strafford Regional Planning Commission who mentioned it in an earlier communication. While SRPC stated that they have the same concerns and would not indiscriminately allow the app access to their website, A. Gourgue, who has knowledge of the app, is not sure that it can’t independently place “hikes” on the web and direct hikers to areas where significant activity could be harmful to the environment. B. Humm will discuss the situation further with SRPC.

NEW BUSINESS:

Variance for Construction at Coppal House Farm: Tobin Farwell described the construction of a septic field and an extension to a current building associated with the expansion of the farm’s production of sunflower seed oil. The leach field is a necessary component of the oil production operation and the requirement of a minimum of 300 gal/day is considered far in excess of the actual needs for cleaning the equipment. A variance is required because the leach field borders on a wetland area. A site visit is planned for May 2.

Variance for Construction at 19 Caldwell Lane: Dustin Morrill presented plans for a 28’ x 28’ 2-story addition to a house at 19 Caldwell Lane which also requires the movement of an existing deck. The entire project lies within the wetland setback from Wheelwright Pond. A. Hartgerink asked for details concerning the run-off from the proposed construction. Mr. Morrill was not able to answer the question. A site visit is scheduled for May 2.

Eagle Scout Project: Jack Hall is to propose a trail construction project on Little River Reserve to the Select Board. B. Humm, C. Fisher, and A. Hartgerink feel that the project is worthy of support.

New England Wildflower Society: Barbara Wauchope described the NE Wildflower Society’s collaboration with the North American Orchid Center to identify, locate and document common orchids in the region. She asked that, during its monitoring activities, the Commission’s members be aware of the presence of native common orchids. If suspected by the Commission members, she will confirm the existence of the plants and help in the preservation of leaf material, DNA, seeds, etc. for the collection and protection of the species.

Nomination of Officers: Bill Humm was nominated to serve as Chair and David Meeker nominated to serve as Secretary/Treasurer for the coming year. Election of officers will be held at the June meeting of the Commission.

Next Meeting: June 5, 2017

Submitted By _____
David Meeker