

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of Meeting of June 4, 2018

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

Approval of Previous Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on May 7, 2018, approved as written.

Updates and Announcements:

LCC Bank Balance: The balance in the Commission's account as of May 31, 2018, was \$18,044.54 composed of

LCC Funds	\$15,234.18
Dave Allan Fund	\$ 2,810.36

SELT Congratulations: B. Humm read a congratulating letter from Southeast Land Trust expressing their appreciation of the Town's actions on the 10-year and 9-year anniversaries of the Lee Five Corners and the Joe Ford easements, respectively.

Culvert Replacement: The wetland permit applications for culvert replacements on Rt. 155 and Thompson Mill Road have been approved.

Easement Monitoring: Monitoring visits to the **James Farm, Sanborn, Grumbling, and Jenkins** easements were made. It was noted that the trail on the James Farm easement is not in good condition and contains a lot of down material. The trail is no longer well-marked and, for that reason, any community or Boy Scout effort to restore the trail will require considerable effort by Commission members in flagging the trail and supervising the activities. A meeting is planned to discuss these issues. Monitoring visits are scheduled for the Verrette (6/6), Brady (6/13), Hutton (6/20), and Little River Park (6/27) easements.

Education and Outreach: C. Fisher reported on a very successful vernal pool walk with a large and mixed group of visitors. She is planning a habitat walk in Little River Park and other walks, including a "Poetry Walk", in the Town Forest for later in the year.

Conservation Land Management: C. Fisher noted that the viewing platform in the Lee Bog is in seriously deteriorated condition. She feels that it needs some immediate attention and additional long-term repairs or replacement. D. Meeker agreed to search for alternatives to replace the platform and will discuss options with Randy Stevens.

Timber Harvest on Cartland Road: The Dugan's plan on cutting timber on their property along the scenic Cartland Road. Information available suggests that the owners and loggers involved are responsible and that the project should not have any negative results.

OLD BUSINESS:

Unclassified Land at 64 Tamarack Road: B. Humm, A. Hartgerink, and C. Fisher visited this property which was recently acquired by the Town due to a tax lien. They found that the property is not a buildable lot due to wet soils and does not abutt any conservation easement so, in their judgement, does not warrant continued Town ownership. After some discussion C. Fisher moved and D. Shay seconded:

Motion: *The Commission recommends that the Town put the property at 64 Tamarack Road up for sale with the understanding that it is not a buildable lot because of the extensive wetlands it contains.*

Passed unanimously.

Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary: A. Tappan reported that she found an extensive patch of garlic mustard behind the house where it may, or may not, be on the Town's property and other smaller patches elsewhere. This problem led to the suggestion that a survey of the boundary be included as a part of the currently developing management plan. C. Fisher suggested that the current owners would not object to a working party being organized to address the current infestation. This possibility will be considered in the future as time permits. A. Tappan reported that a series of aerial photos, dating from 1953, has been compiled. Comparison of the photos over time shows that the formerly cleared fields have undergone extensive overgrowth. For decades the field extended from the road

to Laynes Brook and no longer does that. There are a variety of options for habitat management and she suggested that the Commission visit the property to discuss the possibilities. A tentative date for the visit was set for 9 A.M. on June 16.

Policy for Trail Use: There was a discussion of the need for a policy addressing the interconnected issues of public trail use and protection of the environment in which the trails exist. There is strong support for a policy permitting foot traffic only with horses and wheeled vehicles being prohibited from the trails. C. Fisher noted that there should also be a policy prohibiting harvesting of plants or animals in the Town Forest as she has noticed the definite removal of plants along the trails. B. Humm will discuss these issues with the Recreation Commission.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of Officers: The Commission voted to elect David Meeker as Secretary/Treasurer and William Humm as Chairperson for the coming year.

Sustainability Committee Proposal: The Town's Sustainability Committee has proposed a "Trees of Lee" contest to call attention to the role that trees play in the environment. After considerable discussion it was decided that the Commission would request more information on the details of the contest from the Sustainability Committee and to alert them to the need to ensure that the rights of landowners are protected by those seeking unusual trees within the Town.

Trees Along Recycling Center Road: The Recreation Commission discussed the possibility of cutting the trees along Recycling Center Road with B. Humm. Their motivation for the proposed action is to provide increased parking space along the road adjacent to the baseball field. After considerable discussion it was agreed that the Commission does not recommend or support such an action. B. Humm will discuss this issue with the Recreation Commission and the Town Administrator.

Commission Meeting Schedule: It was noted that the Select Board meetings often conflict with the Commission's meeting dates thus preventing S. Bugbee, or any Board member, from attending its meetings. The situation is complicated as the Select Board often meets every other Monday. This issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Commission.

Retirement of Randy Stevens: A recognition dinner for retiring Randy Stevens is planned for July 25. There was some discussion of a gift from the Commission. It was decided that this would be discussed later and any funds would be privately collected.

Membership in Southeast Land Trust: In addressing the question of the Commission's membership in SELT, C. Fisher moved and D. Shay seconded the following motion which was approved unanimously:

Motion: *The Commission makes a \$300 membership contribution to the Southeast Land Trust.*

Durham Community Outreach Effort: A. Tappan reported that Todd Selig, Durham Town Manager, is suggesting that the adjoining communities might collaborate in addressing various issues which they jointly face. In the Commission's discussion she suggested, although omitted by Mr. Selig, that conservation and environmental issues are appropriate for such an inter-town effort. As an example, B. Humm noted that SELT, Durham, and Lee are working together to conserve the Seth Peters property along the Oyster River. Another example being the joint effort of Lee, Durham, Madbury, and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to protect the Powder Major Farm.

Next Meeting: July 2, 2018

Submitted By _____
David Meeker