

Lyme Recreation Commission Meeting
Town Presentation on Warrant Articles 17, 18, 19
February 25, 2008
Lyme Center Academy Building
7:00 pm

Commission Meeting

Commission Members Present: Dina Cutting, Simon Carr, Tor Tosteson, Robert Couture, Tom Yurkosky, Kathleen Henriques, Peter Mulvihill.

The Commission finished up the following business before the general public arrived at 7 pm.

Decided to discuss and approve Steve Small's report at our next meeting.

Discussed Town Meeting and Little Town Meeting procedures with respect to who will read the Warrant Articles. Decided to ask Rod Finley to attend both meetings.

Public Meeting

Community Members Present: Rod Finley, Rob McCutcheon, Barney Brannen, David & Barbara Roby, Julia Elder, Matthew Stevens, Kathleen Wohlfort, James & Ramon Graham, Pete McGowan, Frank Cutting, Luke Prince, Charles Ragan, Scott Steffey, Faith Catlin, Maryann & Bill Lewis, Horace Henriques, Keith Wilson, Francesca Latawic.

Dina welcomed the attendees and turned the meeting over to Pete who presented background and historical information to help clarify Warrant Articles 17, 18. (This presentation was essentially the same in content as the mailing to the town).

Rod Finley of Pathways Consulting, LLC gave a recap of his findings with the aid of the topographic plan for the field and beach areas.

The soils are silt loam consisting of clay and sand. The field does not drain well. The field is not crowned and there are no sub-drains. Pathways recommends to strip the top 2' off the field; sub-grade the field; insert flat panel drains in 4" of pea stone; cover with 4" of sand then 4" of top soil.

The following questions were asked of Rod Finley-

Scott Steffey: Are you suggesting that cars not be allowed to park on the field?

Rod Finley: Yes. It compacts the field too much.

James Graham: If the pond is at a 2' level and we have a large rainfall which raises the pond level to 3' will the field be playable?

Rod Finley: The field would still be playable as long as the pond could drain back to the 2' level within a week, depending on how wet the season is.

Kathleen Wohlfort: Is the ball field considered wetland soil?

Rod Finley: There are three components to wetlands; soil, vegetation and hydrology. The field would not be considered wetland because there is no vegetation.

Kathleen Wohlfort: Are we trying to create a ball field on wetland?

Rod Finley: No.

Paul Killebrew: Is Chaffee wetland?

Rod Finley: Not all of it, but it does have some of the vegetation.

Pete Mulvihill mentioned the following:

Crossroads Academy has recently built a field which they have offered to the town during construction of the town field and maybe even longer.

Fundraising:

The Recreation Commission (RC) has gone to the community and thus far has raised \$64,000 in private funds leaving a \$30,000 cost to the town.

As Lyme's Soccer Commissioner, Pete Mulvihill indicated that 25% of all soccer events (games and practices) were either postponed or cancelled due to field conditions in the last 2 years. In many cases it was too dangerous for children to play on.

The RC is asking the Conservation Commission (CC) to embrace a 2' Water Release Policy.

The RC is hopeful to begin construction in the fall of 2008. If the field is not constructed by 2009, then all funds will be returned to donors.

Pete then gave a brief history explaining Warrant Article 19.

More Q & A

Community member: Is the CC saying they can't put in bigger pipes?

Peter Mulvihill: The CC sent the RC a letter stating that they can't lower the water level because the land below the 3' high mean water level belongs to the State of New Hampshire.

Community member: Why can't the CC manipulate the dams?

James Graham: You need to release the water slowly. If too much water is released at once, the beavers will move on. We are trying to find a solution but it taking time. We have been working on this for several years. We are facing State Law which only allows us to manipulate anything in wetlands when the water level is above 3'. There have already been lawsuits against the town. Pipes have worked but not well enough to lower the pond to 2' but they have kept the pond from going over 3'. In the past, it would have been illegal to manipulate the dams.

Peter Mulvihill: The reason it appears that the pipes are working and the water is staying between 2.5 and 3.0 feet is because the beaver dams are at 3.0 feet. The pipes, placed at 2.0 feet, would appear to be doing little if anything.

Barney Brannen: It seems there is a conflict between the RC and the CC. In the Normandeau Associates study 2'-2.5' is the recommended height of the pond. What is the source of legal connotations to target 2' rather than 3'?

James Graham: I can't speak for the whole commission. The water release policy is followed because of a civil action which was filed by private landowners. The State determines that it's property ends when the pond level reaches 3'. This is the first year we have had a normal rainfall. It was not good for the recreation area but the pond water level was maintained at a consistent level.

Barney Brannen: Is there any information from the State saying they will file a lawsuit if the water goes below 3'?

James Graham: The State was asked if they would reconsider the Natural Mean High Level (NMHL) and they said no.

Pete Mulvihill read a recent memo from the State to Dina Cutting regarding the NMHL which does not commit the State to the 3' level.

Dina thanked all for coming.

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Henriques, Secretary