

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of April 6, 2021

Chair Dawn Genes opened the meeting by reading the following statement:

"As Chair of the Conservation Commission, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is meeting electronically utilizing the Zoom platform. We previously gave notice to the public of how to access this meeting using Zoom and instructions are provided on the Town of Lee's website at: www.leenh.org. If anybody has a problem with access, please call 603-234-8194. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law."

Present and with no one else present in their respective rooms:

Members: Catherine Fisher (Secretary), Dawn Genes (Chair), Bill Humm, Dave Shay, Deb Sugerman, Anne Tappan

Alternate Member: Mimi Winder

Select Board Representative: Scott Bugbee

Technical Assistance: Caren Rossi, Planning, Zoning, and Health Administrator

Approval of Minutes of February 1, 2021: D. Sugerman moved to accept the minutes as written, and D. Shay seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved by Conservation Commission (LCC) members.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Amanda Gourgue emailed the following report:

The Commission's account balance is \$8,798.68 and is comprised of:

Dave Allen Account Balance \$2,686.69

LCC Account Balance \$6,111.99

At D. Gene's request, A. Gourgue provided a list of nonprofits to which the Commission typically contributes. Dues are owed The American Chestnut Foundation (\$40.00) and membership fees are owed to The NH Timberland Association (\$30.00). B. Humm moved that payments in the above amounts be made to these two organizations, and D. Shay seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Easement Monitoring: Properties monitored in March: Woodrow/Stone (Formerly Short) (3/22); Maud Jones and Garrity Reserve (3/31); Riverside Farm Drive (4/7). A possible encroachment on the Riverside Farm Drive easement will be looked into. Nothing of concern was noted on any of the other properties. Monitoring visits are scheduled for Aldag (4/14); Barth and Crosbie (4/21); and Sanborn (5/1). B. Humm has agreed to meet with D. Shay to go over monitoring protocols.

Education/Outreach: A. Gourgue emailed the following report on the LCC's Facebook page in the period from March 7-April 3:

People Reached 1,410 (31% down from last month)

Post Engagements 387 (3% up from last month)

Page Likes 5 (25% up from last month)

C. Fisher reported that the Thank-you/Save-the-Date notes had been mailed to everyone on our easement monitoring list. She reported that she has been working with Ellen Ervin, an educator with the Oyster River School System, on a video about vernal pools.

A. Tappan reported that the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Field Workshop, co-sponsored by the LCC and the UNH Cooperative Extension (Forestry Specialist, Rebecca DiGirolomo) and held on March 20, was a success. The workshop was attended by approximately 20 people and was held in the Town Forest behind the Public Safety Complex (PSC), where there are numerous EAB-infected ash trees. Additionally, she and R. DiGirolomo, held an EAB workshop on April 5 attended by D. Genes, C.

Fisher, and S. Bugbee. A. Tappan will write an article about EAB in Lee, including links to information, to be published in the E-Crier.

- A. Tappan reported that a UNH PhD candidate may be interested in the site behind the PSC for a study on the response of ash trees to EAB infection. She will meet with him this week to see whether this site is suitable for his study.

Board Reports:

Zoning Board (ZBA): A. Tappan reported that, regarding the special exception request from Eversource, a letter to the ZBA from the LCC was sent on March 3

Planning Board: The Schultz Demeritt Ave. parking area project has been moved from the ZBA to the Planning Board, which met on March 10. A letter to the Planning Board, outlining the LCC's recommendations, was sent on March 3. At the March 10 meeting the Schultz hearing was continued to April 14.

Select Board (BOS): S. Bugbee reported that Recreation Commission (RC) Chair, Larry Lindberg, spoke at the April 5 meeting and indicated that the LCC was working on finding an easement property that would accommodate a disc golf park. D. Genes reported that she had attended the April 6 RC meeting and informed them that there is no Town-owned easement property suitable for disc golf. S. Bugbee reported that R. Steven's attorney had informed him that the treehouse is down, and that Mr. Stevens does not intend to rebuild it.

OLD BUSINESS:

Trails Committee (TC): D. Sugerman reported on work plans drawn up by each of the groups associated with the trail systems at Maud Jones Memorial Forest, Town Forest, and Little River Park.

Maud Jones:

Blazes: TC members will blaze both the main and Captain Parker trails in spring.

Dog Waste Station: Take Five has agreed to put up and maintain a dog waste station.

Naming Trails: Mast Way students will be involved in naming trails.

Educational Signage: Signage describing forestry techniques will be put in place near the logged area on the west side of the property.

Parking Area on 155/Turtle Pond Rd: Several years ago, this parking area had a temporary access permit, since lapsed, for the logging described above. The space needs only minor improvement and could accommodate six to eight vehicles. Before an application for a driveway permit egress from 155 can be submitted to NHDOT, it must first get BOS approval. D. Sugerman moved to have C. Rossi make an application to NHDOT for a driveway permit from 155 to submit to the BOS for approval, and D. Shay seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members. S. Bugbee requested that a map showing the location of the parking area be included when C. Rossi submits the application to the BOS.

Parking Area on Garrity Road: Because this small lot is difficult to plow, Lee Public Works Manager, Steve Bullek, is interested in improving it. D. Sugerman will send an email to A. Tappan to arrange a meeting with S. Bullek to discuss options.

Little River Park (LRP):

MOU with Recreation Committee (RC): D. Sugerman and D. Genes attended the April Recreation Committee meeting to go over the revised MOU. The new MOU puts the trails in LRP under the purview of the LCC and has a footnote stating that it replaces the old MOU. Because the LCC is not involved with trails on private land, B. Humm recommended the following edit: "All trails on *Town-owned land*." A. Tappan requested that the amended MOU draft be sent to LCC members.

Blazes: TC members will remove existing metal blazes and paint blazes on the park's three trails.
Park Boundary Signage: Work is being done on designing "Park Ends - Private Property Beyond" signs for the snowmobile trail. The Town has a deeded ROW, but beyond the park's boundaries, either side of the trail is private property. S. Bugbee noted that the snowmobile trail runs through

Rick Stevens' property and that only snowmobiles have permission to use it; R. Stevens has had problems with bicyclists using the trail, despite signs stating that the trail is on private property.

Ridge Trail Erosion: Signage is needed indicating that no wheeled vehicles are allowed on the trail. It was noted that the LCC has no overall policy regarding wheeled vehicles. None are allowed in the Town Forest, but there is nothing to indicate that they are prohibited.

Boardwalk Site Visit: In preparation for the construction of the boardwalk on the River Trail, TC members will visit Piscassic Greenway where Phil Auger will talk with them about how the boardwalks there were constructed.

Dog Easter Egg Hunt: A. Tappan reported that she and D. Sugerman walked the trails prior to the event. The Forest Loop Trail appeared to work best. By all reports, the event went well.

Town Forest (TF):

Trails Configuration: TC members have surveyed folks who walk the TF trails and have found that about 50% like the current configuration of the trails, and 50% find them confusing. TC members have been working on a configuration that will enhance accessibility, safety and enjoyment and have flagged options for the yellow, red, and blue trails.

14 Acre Transfer Station/Highway Department Parcel: The yellow trail begins and continues for some way through Highway Dept. land. S. Bullek has requested a site visit to walk this part of the trail to see if there is a way that to enlarge the space available to the Highway Dept. He is concerned about the location of a vernal pool in this location.

Consolidated TF Map: C. Rossi suggested that the LCC seek bids for a map of the entire TF from the Transfer Station to Wheelwright Pond. D. Genes asked if Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) could create such a map. C. Rossi suggested that the LCC determine how extensive such a map will need to be; all scanned surveys could be sent to SRPC and they will provide a price for creating a consolidated map.

Conservation Easement Markers: Diamond-shaped markers, available from Voss Signs, would be put in place to better mark all the easement boundaries. D. Genes asked if such markers might be available more cheaply from the State. D. Sugerman said Voss was the source of the markers currently in use in the TF, and that the company still has the template.

Bog Platform: Randy Stevens is ready to order materials and has people who will assist in the construction. Cost of materials is \$4000.00. B. Humm asked if R. Stevens will be paid for his work. D. Sugerman will contact him to clarify whether he is working for a fee or as a volunteer.

Trail Maintenance Supplies: D. Sugerman reported that blazing the trails on all three properties will take place in spring. \$250.00 is needed for paint, brushes, etc. C. Fisher moved to approve the expenditure of \$250.00 for trail maintenance supplies, and D. Shay seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Outreach: D. Sugerman reported that she has done write-ups about the work of the TC in the E-Crier, LCC Facebook page, and NeighborLEE Facebook page. She reported a good response from NeighborLEE. As trail work is done, she will post pictures in each of these media resources.

NH Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant: RTP provides grant monies for most aspects of trail maintenance and improvement, including trailhead kiosks. D. Sugerman reported that grant applications for FY 2022 are due on June 18, 2021. She has registered for a RTP grant application workshop held online on May 5, 2021.

LRP Trail Project: D. Sugerman reported that Marc Jacobs has no update on mitigation. C. Fisher reported that she has not begun the finished version of the trail map. The rest of the kiosk sign including wildlife photographs and maps is ready, with the exception of a map of the Little River Watershed. D. Genes will check to see if one is available from NRCS.

Library Expansion and Conservation Considerations: A. Tappan reported that at the April 5 BOS meeting, Annie Gasowski stated that those involved in this project are working with Town committees. In a letter to the Library Trustees, the LCC pointed out that the bog is an important natural resource. This letter was forwarded to North Point, under consideration for engineering services for the library expansion project. North Point's reply indicated that they had received no

information regarding wetland buffers, or the bog, and that they would work with the LCC to minimize impact on the bog. D. Genes and A. Tappan will attend the Library meeting on April 14, 2021.

Spring House Cover on Maud Jones: A. Tappan reported that S. Bullek is still waiting on materials.

NEW BUSINESS:

Invasives Treatment on Town-Owned Land:

Woodrow/Stone (Formerly Short) Property: The new owners of this property contacted the LCC to inquire about treating invasive plants on their property and on the portion of Garitty Reserve that abuts their property. Both owners are foresters and knowledgeable about native and invasive plants. LCC members agreed to allow this work to proceed. An annual update on the property owners' progress will be obtained by members monitoring the property each spring. D. Genes will write to the property owners to let them know the LCC approved of their proposal and, at A. Tappan's suggestion, to inquire as to how the materials will be disposed of. A copy of the letter will go in the property's easement folder.

Rothwell Reserve, Ford Wildlife Sanctuary, and Town Forest: These properties have been treated annually by Biospray. Before the company can apply for a permit for this year's treatment, a payment authorization is necessary. Biospray manager, Dennis Hayward, provided estimates for each property: Rothwell, \$150.00; Joe Ford, \$90.00-125.00; Town Forest, \$280.00-350.00. B. Humm moved to authorize payment not to exceed \$650.00 to Biospray, and D. Shay seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Bridge Replacement on Rt. 125: D. Genes forwarded a letter from the consultants hired by the NHDOT to evaluate the environmental impact of replacing this bridge which crosses the Little River. Work won't be done until 2022-23. B. Humm suggested that A. Gourgue, who lives nearby, might have insight into the wetlands that may be impacted. Input from members will be discussed at the May meeting.

Proposed Whippoorwill Study, Old Mill/Lee 5 Corners: A researcher has approached NRCS about conducting a Whippoorwill study on NRCS-owned cottontail sites. The study involves placing a recording device out in May and retrieved a month or two later. Old Mill Reserve and Lee 5 Corners are two of the properties being considered. There has, thus far, been no second round of information on the proposed study.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Submitted by: _____

Catherine Fisher