

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes of Meeting of October 26, 2021

Present: Catherine Fisher (Secretary), Dawn Genes (Chair), Amanda Gourgue (Treasurer), Bill Humm, Dave Shay, Deb Sugerman, Anne Tappan

Alternate Member: Mimi Winder

Select Board Representative: Scott Bugbee

Approval of Minutes of September 28, 2021: D. Shay moved to accept the minutes as written; D. Sugerman seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by Lee Conservation Commission (LCC) members.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: D. Genes reported that annual dues are owed to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) and Southeast Land Trust (SELT) in the amounts of \$250.00 and \$300.00, respectively. D. Genes moved that payment in the amount of \$250.00 be made to NHACC; C. Fisher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members. D. Genes moved that payment in the amount of \$300.00 be made to SELT; B. Humm seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members. In an email sent to LCC members, Treasurer Amanda Gourgue, reported that the following transactions:

\$1,395.00 - Catherine Arakelian (kiosk expenses)

342.22 - NHDES (permit fee)

35.00 - Catherine Fisher (education reimbursement - NHACC conference registration)

The LCC's account balance remains at \$8,140.89 and is comprised of:

David Allan Fund Account Balance: \$2,686.69

LCC Account Balance: \$5,454.20

Education/Outreach: C. Fisher reported that she had written four articles about the conservation easements monitored in the past month. They appeared in the E-Crier and the LCC Facebook page.

In an email sent to LCC members, A. Gourgue reported the following activity for the period from Sept. 27-Oct. 24:

People reached: 2,014 (down 12%)

Post Engagements: 484 (down 18%)

Page Likes: 5 (down 29%)

The mushroom post of Oct. 10 was the most popular of the month. It was seen by 620 people, had 78 post clicks, and had 45 reactions, comments, and shares.

Easement Monitoring: Properties monitored in September and October: Chisholm (9/29), Verette (10/6), Schultz (10/13). Nothing of concern was noted on any of these properties, but owners on two of the properties did pose questions:

Chisholm: In response to the property owner's inquiry about the possibility of installing a yurt, D. Genes emailed a copy of the easement showing the exclusion boundaries.

Schultz: During the monitoring visit, the property owner inquired about caring for a cemetery on the easement. It was determined that this question will be referred to Peter Hoyt, Chairman of the Cemetery Trustees.

B. Humm noted that the spreadsheet showing the status of the year's easement monitoring reports shows that reports need to be written and sent for DeMerritt Hill Farm, Cox, Powder Major's Forest, and Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary (JFWS) and Lee Five Corners (L5C). D. Shea noted that the report for Cox is sent to NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and is done online. A. Tappan noted that JFWS and L5C are monitored by SELT; she will contact the person who does the monitoring and ask if a report has been sent to DES and request a copy be sent for the LCC files.

OLD BUSINESS:

Conservation Projects Underway:

Mowing on Town-owned lands: A. Tappan reported that she has not heard from Public Works Director, Steve Bullek, regarding having a subcontractor mow and clear areas in both JFWS and Old Mill Reserve Complex (OMRC).

(OMRC): D. Genes reported that she has not yet heard from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) regarding a management plan and whether there is a possibility of their contributing to associated costs of maintaining the easement as an early succession habitat.

Town Forest Complex (TFC):

Survey Map: D. Genes reported that the Landry survey map has been completed, but that the map doesn't have the six acre parcel that includes the vernal pool. Pete Landry has been contacted and he can add this to the map, bringing the cost to \$2,000.00. D. Sugerman moved to remit \$2,000.00 to Landry Surveying LLC; C. Fisher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Trails Work Day: D. Sugerman reported that a group of five LEE Trails Committee (LTC) and four volunteers rerouted two trails to avoid steep and icy trails. The year's final trail workday will be held on Saturday, November 5. As there are no longer any funds to purchase paint and other materials needed, D. Sugerman moved to make up to \$250.00 available for trail work supplies; D. Shay seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Bridges: DES approved the repair/replacement of eight bridges in the TFC. The permit is good for five years. One LTC member has volunteered to purchase all wood through his company, which will cut down on costs. The LTC hopes to get two bridges finished in November; however D. Sugerman raised the issue of how to allocate funds for the project. A. Tappan reported that at the most recent Select Board (BOS) meeting, members discussed how to use funds allocated to Lee from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The BOS is particularly interested in using the funds to benefit public safety. As the bridges in their current state of disrepair are a liability, S. Bugbee suggested putting together information about the costs of rebuilding TFC bridges (and other bridges on Town-owned conserved land) and bringing it before the BOS. The use of these ARPA monies to fund other LCC projects that are concerned with public safety (MJMF parking lot, Little River Park (LRP) bridges, removing trees made hazardous due to emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation) was also discussed.

EAB Project: A. Tappan reported that all the field work has been completed. Study trees were felled and peeled and EAB larvae collected for study. She assisted throughout the work days (10/5, 10/13 and 10/14). Three LTC members also assisted.

LRP:

Kiosk: D. Sugerman reported that the panel is up and associated invoices have been paid.

Bridges: D. Sugerman reported that a copy of the DES permit must accompany the remittance for the mitigation fee.

Habitat Marker QR Codes: D. Sugerman reported that the second draft of the QR code for each marker has been completed.

Trails Tales: D. Sugerman reported that the Trails Tales markers have been very popular and that the Library plans to put a new series of stories in place in spring.

Work Day for Invasive Plants Species: A. Tappan and M. Winder will plan a work day along the early succession habitat section of the River Trail. D. Sugerman will invite LTC members.

MJMF: A. Tappan reported that in order to move ahead with creating an improved parking area, an official LCC vote is needed. D. Shay moved that the LCC go forward with plans to fund an improved parking area; C. Fisher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members. D. Genes will submit it at the BOS meeting on October 28.

Wadleigh Falls/Lamprey River Canoe Launch: The river is undercutting the granite step and a mud groove has developed where people have slid their canoes and kayaks along the grass banking. As the river is now too high

to make any improvements, D. Genes suggested putting the topic on hold until the Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC) is ready to move forward - likely summer, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS:

Future Meetings Dates and Times: D. Genes told members that she had looked over the Town's monthly meetings calendar and noted that the 4th Thursday of the month has few meetings. The LCC wishes to choose a time that fits with S. Bugbee's schedule. Holding meetings in late afternoon is also preferred. As the 4th Thursday of November is Thanksgiving, she proposed, and LCC members agreed, to hold November's meeting on November 30 from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Complex. The issue of holding December's meeting on the 23rd will be discussed at November's meeting.

Meeting with Library Trustees, November 3 at 5:30: The Library Trustees have requested a meeting to go over their request for a variance for the proposed library buildout that impinges upon the Town's wet soils buffer zone setback. .

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 30, 4:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Complex

Submitted by: _____
Catherine Fisher