

Lee Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting of January 25, 2022

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

Alternate Member: Mimi Winder

Select Board Representative: Scott Bugbee

Guests: Martin Thornton, Lee Trails Committee (LTC); Chuck Cox, Lee Sustainability Committee and Agricultural Committee

Approval of Minutes of January 4, 2022: 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 Treasurer Amanda Gourgue emailed her report on the LCC's account. Transactions for the month were as follows:

\$455.00 to Tuckaway Farm for mowing of Joe Ford property

64.00 to D. Sugerman for trail QR signs.

270.00 returned to LCC from Lee general fund for the double payment to C. Cox. A.

Gourgue noted that this amount has not yet appeared in the account.

The total balance stands at \$5,621.89 and is comprised of:

David Allan Fund: \$2,686.69

LCC Account: 2,935.20

Education Outreach: C. Fisher reported that A. Gourgue emailed the following report on the LCC's Facebook (FB) page for December 26 - January 22:

People Reached 35,414 (up 741%)

Post Engagements: 4,384 (up 434%)

Page Likes 13 (up 333%)

The most popular post was from Jan. 7, a photograph of an owl snow sculpture which was seen by 30,900 people, had 724 post clicks, and 2,800 reactions, comments & shares. The numbers on this post continue to grow.

Articles for E-Crier/FB: C. Fisher reported that she had written three "Stumpology" articles, Parts 5, 6 and 7 which were seen by 2161, 1440, and 1013 people, respectively.

Board Reports:

Library Board of Trustees (LBOT): A. Tappan reported that the LBOT met on January 12 and approved and signed a revised Jones & Beach contract for engineering services related to a library addition. The LBOT met on January 24 with SMP architects. The plan is to start with renovations and remodeling of the existing building. No work on the extension is planned. S. Bugbee reported that the Select Board (BOS) will have the LBOT come before them to have them report what their plans are and how the work will be paid for. A. Tappan

noted that Jones and Beach might benefit from the information in the LCC letter regarding the proposed expansion; D. Genes will ask Caren to forward it.

BOS: S. Bugbee reported that the BOS has approved the \$7,000 requested by the LCC for FY 2022-23. S. Bugbee reported that Alan Dennis, Rebecca Hawthorne, and Cary Brown are running for a seat on the BOS.

OLD BUSINESS:

Updates one Town Conservation Lands:

Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary (JFWS): C. Cox reported that the chain for the northwest gate has been repaired.

Trails Committee (TC):

Little River Park (LRP) River Trail Project: D. Sugerman brought the finished Little River Park (LRP) River Trail QR code tags in for LCC members to see and try out. She noted that M. Thornton continues to monitor the water level and flow at the site of the planned culvert and brook bridges.

Proposed "Glacial Erratic" Trail at Maud Jones Memorial Forest (MJMF): M. Thornton provided a handout and proposed the creation of a third trail providing access to the glacial erratic located on the north (Rt. 155) side of the property. The trail would loop north of the Kettle Hole trail at Layne's Brook. A bank-to-bank 16 foot bridge and will cross two to three feet above the stream and overlook the cascading brook. D. Shay will submit a Trail Permit-by-Notification form to the Department of Environmental Services (DES) for the proposed bridge. The trail will turn north before a natural ridge and ravine and skirt the edge of the Demonstration Forest area. A sign, indicating the end of town property, will be posted at the turn. A QR code sign, providing information about the glacial erratic, will be installed near the erratic. Estimated costs for signs and bridge construction are \$685.00; some of these costs may be defrayed if the laminated western red cedar poles offered by C. Cox for use in constructing the bridge are suitable for the project. LCC members made plans for a site visit on February 2. A later walk, in which abutters will be invited, is planned.

By-Laws: D. Sugerman reported that the by-laws had been passed. The TC will have seven regular members and seven alternate members. The first hybrid meeting (regular members attending in-person; alternates attending via zoom) is planned for January 26.

AARP Grant: D. Sugerman reported that she will be applying for an AARP Community Challenge Grant.

Paper Birch Syrup Research Project, LRP: C. Fisher reported that she, A. Tappan and Marc Nelson met with David Moore on January 5 at LRP and determined that the birch stand in the Mills Reserve early succession area is suitable for the research project. In addition to the birches at the new location, four birches at the site near the new parking area will have sensors installed. A. Tappan reported that the proposal was approved by the BOS on January 10. D. Moore indicated that he hopes to have all the equipment installed by the end of January.

Town Forest (TF) Apple Tree Pruning Workshop: D. Sugerman reported that she, C. Fisher and A. Tappan met with Andy Crowley (Stewardship Projects Manager, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF), and Bryan Cassidy on January 19, in the

TF in the old orchard (behind the Public Safety Complex (PSC)). This part of the TF is outside the conservation easement. There are at least a half a dozen old apple trees on the site. B. Cassidy proposed doing a demonstration of pruning techniques on “gone wild” apple trees so as to improve tree health and fruiting and to provide an opportunity for community members to connect to the landscape. The workshop will be cosponsored by the LCC and SPNHF, and will be held on March 5 or March 12, or, if interest is high, workshops will be held on both dates. B. Cassidy, A. Crowley, C. Fisher, D. Sugerman, and A. Tappan all plan to attend; the number of registrants will be limited to 12. SPNHF will provide tools and one apple tree ladder. SPNHF will help promote the workshop through Nature Groupie and the LCC will advertise the event in the E-Crier and on the LCC Facebook page. Registration will be through Nature Groupie. Once the BOS has approved the workshop, A. Tappan will notify the Police and Fire Departments that participants will be parking at the PSC on the day(s) of the event(s). C. Cox noted that he has known B. Cassidy through his work at the Brown Center for Experiential Education; he noted that B. Cassidy has been active on the Durham Agriculture Commission and has been pruning blueberries on the Cox property for several years. D. Sugerman moved to approve holding the workshop; C. Fisher seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Proposed Winter Tree ID Workshop: A Tappan reported that she had been contacted by UNH Cooperative Extension Forestry Field Specialist, Rebecca DiGirolomo about having the LCC cosponsor a Winter Tree ID workshop at LRP. This workshop will be part of the UNH Coop. Ext.’s “Women in the Woods” program and will be open to all people. R. DiGirolomo, Wendy Scribner (Cooperative Extension Forestry Field Specialist), A. Tappan and C. Fisher will lead the workshop. Registration and advertising will be through UNH Coop. Ext. The event will be held on February 26 or March 16. A. Tappan will provide material for the Consent Agenda about the proposed workshop for the February 7 BOS meeting. A. Tappan moved to have the LCC cosponsor, with UNH Coop. Ext., a Winter Tree ID Workshop at LRP; D. Sugerman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by LCC members.

Reports from Work Groups:

Drinking Water (DW): D. Genes reported that she, Laurel Cox, and D. Shay met remotely. L. Cox provided several maps of the town’s water resources. D. Genes provided a handout of topics discussed by the group concerning quality and quantity of the town’s water resources and listing local, regional, state and federal resource information.

LCC Web Page Modifications: D. Sugerman reported that a zoom meeting is planned. The language and format of the web page will be sent to LCC members in a word document for review and approval. Once all edits have been incorporated, the Assistant Town Administrator can put the page online. M. Winder reported that as there are both plant and animal invasive species the section of the web page dealing with invasives will be changed from “invasive plants” to “invasive species”.

Invasive Species Control: A. Tappan reported that the group met remotely; the following topics were discussed:

Biospray: As the decision whether or not to use the services of BioSpray during 2022 needs to be made early in the year, the group reviewed the conservation properties that have been

treated in recent years and recommended that none required treatment by BioSpray in 2022. A. Tappan reported that Public Works Director, Steve Bullek, has allowed his herbicide applicator permit to lapse, but his connection with State Invasive Species Coordinator, Doug Cygan, may be a resource the LCC can use to treat problem areas.

JFWS: S. Bullek will work with D. Cygan at JFWS; S. Bullek will purchase what supplies are needed and bill the LCC. S. Bullek plans to use wire mesh method to treat the knotweed patch along the power line right of way. A. Tappan noted that the vegetative management plan for the Japanese knotweed needs to be rewritten.

Future Plans: Another remote meeting is planned. Topics to be discussed are researching alternative chemical treatment; identifying times of the year and locations conducive to engaging volunteers to assist with manual removal of invasive species; creating a calendar of activities. In advertising events, the group would like to use a congenial title such as "Habitat Helpers".

Town Conservation Lands Management: C. Fisher reported that she and D. Shay had written a summary for MJM and would be sending it to the LCC members for review. She reported that A. Tappan will do the summaries for JFWS and for Lee Five Corners. Once the final version of the summary is approved by LCC members, group members will try to meet weekly with the goal of getting a few easement summaries done each week.

NH Department of Transportation (DOT) 125 Bridge Crossing over Little River: D. Shay reported that he has drafted a letter with input from LCC regarding impact on conserved lands.

NEW BUSINESS:

2022 Easement Monitoring Schedule: C. Fisher discussed the possibility of having two groups of two or three persons to do this year's monitoring. Mark Nelson took part in some of the monitoring sessions last year, A. Tappan discussed the possibility of being able to participate, and M. Winder expressed interest in participating. C. Fisher suggested that, with the exception of moving the Fogg monitoring session to an earlier date than currently scheduled (possibly making it the first property to be monitored, perhaps in late March), no changes be made to the monitoring schedule. If two groups are available to do monitoring perhaps groups could work on alternate weeks.

Regional Composting Working Group: C. Cox reported that the Lee Sustainability Committee is working with other sustainability groups in the area to create a regional composting group.

Town of Lee Deliberative Session: 9:00 a.m., Saturday, February 5, 2022 at Mast Way School

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 22, 2022

Submitted

by _____
Catherine Fisher