

Lee Conservation Commission Minutes Tuesday, August 15, 2023

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

Alternate members: Laurel Cox, Mark Nelson

Select Board Representative: Scott Bugbee,

Town Administrator: Andy Robertson, Town Administrator, briefly joined the meeting

Motion: To approve the Minutes of June 20 Meeting: D. Shay moved to accept, C. Fisher seconded; the motion was approved by the Lee Conservation Commission (LCC)

Motion: To approve the Minutes of Monitoring Walk at Garrity Reserve, June 7: D. Shay moved to accept, C. Fisher seconded; the motion was approved by the LCC

Motion: To approve the Minutes of Monitoring Walk at Ricky and Randy Stevens Easements, June 28: D. Genes moved to accept, C. Fisher seconded; the motion was approved by the LCC. Note that the landowner requested permission to place a non permanent structure (pergola) on the easement property. The LCC has no issue with this request.

Clarification of requirements for minutes: Discussion of when minutes are required continued. Andy Robertson, Town Administrator, joined the meeting to discuss this. He will contact the town lawyer for clarification and let us know the requirements.

Monthly Reports

Education and Outreach: C. Fisher submitted via email. Report attached.

ZBA/NHEC ROW/Land Stewardship Survey: A. Tappan submitted via email. Report attached.

Monitoring: D. Shay submitted via email. Report attached.

Treasurers/Social Media: A. Gorge submitted via email. Report attached.

Canoe Launch/Meeting Minutes: M. Winder submitted via email. Report attached.

Trails: D. Sugerman submitted via email. Report attached.

Motion: The Conservation Commission allocate \$1,400 to the Trails committee to replace Bridge #8 this fall. D. Sugerman approved; M. Winder seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by the LCC

OLD BUSINESS

Old Mill Reserve: D. Genes shared a proposal for a Restoration Plan from New Hampshire Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This project is large in scope. It was suggested that the project be scaled down into smaller, more manageable projects. The initial cost estimate is \$46K which would be paid by the town and reimbursed by NRCS. The Old Mill Reserve Working Group (OMRWG) (D. Genes, L. Cox, C. Fisher, A. Tappan) will meet to discuss this project further. The meeting is scheduled for August 22 at 9am in the Lee Town Offices.

Motion: For the LCC to authorize the OMRWG to review, recommend changes, and negotiate with NRCS on behalf of the LCC. D. Genes moved to accept, D. Sugerman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by the LCC.

Durgin Preserve at Wheelwright Pond: LCC members have visited this site on multiple occasions during the spring and summer, 2023. There is a concern for safety, erosion, over use, and access. Some ideas under

consideration are to close or remove the dock, block the current access trail as it is steep and dangerous, create alternate access trails and add additional picnic tables. A. Tappan will review the Land and Water Conservation Fund requirements concerning the property.

Fitzpatrick Variance Request: A site visit was performed and a quorum was not present. The observations were shared and a draft letter for the ZBA was reviewed and discussed. The consensus is that the LCC is not in favor of supporting this request. A. Tappan will make revisions to the letter and share with the LCC for review in time for it to be submitted to the ZBA prior to their August 30 meeting.

Lee Chainsaw Policy: Per the new Lee Chainsaw Policy, Martin Thornton and Paul McComisky of the Lee Trails Committee are scheduled to take a chainsaw safety class through DPW in September where they will become certified. M. Winder is already certified. M. Winder will purchase the required first aid kit.

Motion: To allocate funds to purchase a first aid kit in compliance with the Lee Chainsaw Policy guidelines, not to exceed \$100. D. Shay moved to accept; C. Fisher seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by the LCC.

NEW BUSINESS

Schultz Easement: Easement holder Fred Schultz requests permission to put up a temporary tent for wedding parties. Per the easement document this is not allowable as only structures for “noncommercial” activities are permitted. D. Genes will inform Mr. Schultz of this easement limitation.

Easement inquiry: A Lee resident has expressed an interest in putting some land into conservation easement. LCC will follow up with this request.

Stewardship/Habitat Activities: It was noted that much still needs to be done for buckthorn and invasive plant mitigation at the Lamprey River Canoe Launch. M. Winder plans to schedule some workdays this fall to address this and other potential stewardship concerns on Lee Town Lands.

Lee Fair: There was a brief discussion of LCC participation in the Lee Fair. The theme for this year will be Stewardship. This could also provide an opportunity to create interest for new members for the LCC and to promote outreach activities.

Adjourn: 6:26 (Enjoy the Ice Cream Social!)

Respectfully Submitted: Mimi Winder

Lee Conservation Commission (LCC)

Education/Outreach Report for Meeting of August 15, 2023

Submitted by: Catherine Fisher

Activity since meeting of June 20, 2023

Articles Written: Fifteen articles were written in the eight weeks since the meeting of June 20.

Easement Monitoring Articles: Seven articles were written and posted on the LCC Facebook (FB) page and also appeared in the Lee E-Crier: "Early Succession Habitat and Stewardship" (June 21); "A Wet Season's Slime Mold Bonanza" July 5; "Garbage Out" (July 12); "Bright Moments" (July 19); "Resilience" (August 2); "Spotted Orb Weaver: A Lovely Parting Gift" (August 9).

Nature Notes: Eight articles were written and posted on the LCC FB page and appeared in the E-Crier. "A Lifelong Mimic: The Red-Spotted Purple Part 2" (July 3); "A Tale of Two Poppies Part 1: Greater Celandine" (July 10); "A Tale of Two Poppies Part 2: Celandine Poppy" (July 17); "The Beetle from Over the Rainbow" (July 24); "Meeting Familiar Faces in New Places" (July 26); "Wolf Spiders are Wonderful Mothers" (July 31); "A Visitor in the Kitchen: Northeastern Pine Sawyer" (August 7); "The Eft: Lovely and Lethal" (August 14).

Nature Walks:

Tadpole Stroll, Town Forest, June 24

Overcast and drizzly weather led to a very small turnout of four people, but we had a lot of fun nonetheless and caught all manner of wood frog and spotted salamander tadpoles, some still full-fledged larvae, others almost completely metamorphosed and others in some in-between state of transformation. A wide variety of aquatic arthropods were also scooped up, and we spent nearly an hour and a half having fun at the vernal pool.

Lee Library Nature Walk, Town Forest, July 21

A group of about 16 people took part in a walk to the vernal pool, with stops to listen to birds and imitate their calls; learn about white pine stumps, beech trees and the various berries that were ripening; and count the variety of shapes and colors of the scores of mushrooms that adorned the trail edges. The children (and their parents and grandparents - this was a multi-generational walk) asked a lot of questions. This was a very fun walk.

Lee Greeters, Little River Park, July 26

Five people took part in a walk along the River Trail. Due to the heat, we kept clear of the early successional part of the trail and kept to the shaded path down to the River. None of the participants had ever been on the River Trail and all were really impressed by the beauty of the floodplain and the Little River.

Upcoming Events:

Lee Day at Bedrock Gardens, August 20 I met with Roanne Robbins, Educator at BG on August 20. As there isn't a lot in the way of ungroomed natural habitat, I opted to do land art, using whatever is available in the one ungroomed area that had plenty of pinecones, sticks, etc. that can be used to create mandalas. Mimi Winder will also be taking part in the activity and we made an additional visit on August 10. We will bring materials for mandala-construction, and Roanne has offered to supply us with flower heads supplied by a nursery where she works.

Lee Library : One or two nature walks, date TBD, will take place in August. Once the school year begins, we'll be back to our two-walks/month schedule, with a morning preschool walk followed by an after school walk.

Seacoast Village Program, Town Forest Walk, October: Date to be determined.

Geology of the Town Forest, October: Wally Bothner, retired UNH geology professor will lead a walk and talk about the geology of the Town Forest and explain the formation of those awesome ravines!

Monthly Report for 8/15/23 Lee CC Meeting

Submitted by: Anne Tappan

Topic: ZBA and Planning Board

Activity since last CC meeting: ZBA - Fitzpatrick request for variances in the Lee Shoreland Conservation Zone

***** Separately, a project description along with a site plan of the additions proposed in the Shoreland Conservation Zone will be sent to the CC prior to the 8/15 meeting.*****

Action required: Discuss the project. Decide on CC comments and recommendations for a letter to the ZBA. The ZBA hearing is August 30. A finalized letter goes to C. Rossi by August 25.

Topic: Coastal Watershed Land Stewardship Survey

Activity since last CC meeting:

I received and responded to a survey from the Coastal Land Stewardship Survey team. The purpose of the survey is to gauge land stewardship needs in the region, possibly leading to the creation of a new land stewardship grant program. The response was due by July 21- between CC meetings. Deb provided some trails input. The e-mail message I received is copied below.

I am contacting you to invite you to participate in a survey to gauge land stewardship needs in the coastal NH watershed and provide input for the potential creation of a new land stewardship grant program. **We are seeking at least one response from every community and conservation non-profit or agency in the coastal watershed.** We've identified you as someone who makes decisions about stewardship activities on conservation land in the watershed. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete, and your input will inform the potential creation of the new grant.

Action Required: None needed. A. Tappan, will keep the CC informed about this topic.

Topic: NHEC ROW Clearing at Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary - Update

Activity since last CC meeting:

I contacted the NH Electric Cooperative Utility Arborist, Cory Keeffe in late June to inquire about the schedule for ROW maintenance clearing at Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary. Based on conversations during a site walk in December 2021 (C. Keeffe, A. Tappan, D. Genes), C. Keeffe suggested maintenance work might be done this fall. According to the recent discussion with C. Keeffe, his "best guess" for work on the Ford ROW would not be until 2027 or 2028. Following certain restrictions (distances to powerlines) and coordination with NHEC, it may be possible to have some clearing done by a local contractor in order to do some work within the ROW sooner. Glossy buckthorn is a major component of ROW vegetation.

Action Required: None at this time. Keep in touch with NHEC contact, Cory Keeffe. Explore options for clearing parts of the ROW sooner.

Monthly Report for August 15, 2023 Lee CC Meeting Submitted by David Shay

Topic: Easement Monitoring

Activity since meeting of June 20, 2023

Easement properties monitored and by whom:

June 21 – Quigley (C Fisher, D. Shay w/ LO Don and Gloria Quigley)

June 21 – McLean (C. Fisher, D. Shay)

June 28 – Stevens (C. Fisher, M. Nelson, D. Shay, M. Winder, w/ LO Randy Stevens and Ricky Stevens' daughter Kristy Stevens)

June 28 – Stevens (C. Fisher, M. Nelson, D. Shay, M. Winder, w/ Randy Stevens and LO Kristy Stevens)

July 5 – Henry (M. Nelson, D. Shay, M. Winder)

July 12 – Cox (C. Fisher, D. Shay, w/ LO Chuck Cox and LCHIP Natural Resources Steward, Andrew Chaplin)

July 12 – Cox (C. Fisher, D. Shay, w/ LO Chuck Cox and LCHIP Natural Resources Steward, Andrew Chaplin)

July 19 – Brady (C. Fisher, D. Shay, w/ LO Jim Brady)

July 26 – Lee/Hartgerink (C. Fisher, D. Shay, w/ LO Tom Lee)

August 2 – Ellis Oyster River (C. Fisher, D. Shay)

August 9 – Shulz/Friedlander (C. Fisher, D. Shay)

Action Required: Re-flag unconfirmed property lines on McLean, Henry, and Ellis Oyster River easements.

Easement Monitoring Scheduled for August 16 – September 13:

August 16 – Brisard

August 23 – Noble farm

*September 2 – Sanborn (This date is a **Saturday**)

*September 9 – Chisholm (This date is a **Saturday**)

* will confirm these dates with property owner

Monthly Report for 8/15/23 Lee CC Meeting

Submitted by: A. Gourgue.

Treasurer's Report

David Allan Fund Account \$2,703.08

LCC Account \$8,544.43

Total \$11,247.51

We had many transactions since our last meeting...

Postage costs \$6.84

Ricci Lumber for Aldo Leopold benches and Esker bridge \$331.95

Reimbursement to Martin Thornton - Aldo Leopold benches and the Esker bridge \$53.35

American Chestnut Foundation \$40

NHTOA \$100

Social Media Report

July 17th - August 13th

People Reached 4,500

Page Visits 240

Page Likes 5

Our most popular post was from August 7th, which was Nature Notes, A Visitor in the Kitchen from Catherine. It reached 1,832 people and had 27 reactions, 5 comments, and 4 shares.

However, a big thank you to Catherine and Deb for doing weekly posts Monday - Wednesday. Go, team!

Trails Committee Report to Conservation Commission
Submitted by Deb Sugerman
August 15, 2023

1. Kiosks

- a. Six kiosks were built and installed this fiscal year. The wood was cut and stained over the winter and constructed and installed during the summer. A total of 210 volunteer hours were spent on the project and cost \$1,132.



2. Old kiosks from MJMF and TF were given to the Historical Society and the Library and were installed Monday, August 7.



3. T-shirts

- a. Screen print is done - we can now use it for t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, etc.
- b. Excel spreadsheet is available with sizes on it - pay me by Aug. 24

4. Stickers

- a. Greg Ewing printed them
- b. He is working with the library on the "Lee Tails Hiking Challenge" and will continue to work with them on nature bingo and scavenger hunt activities.

5. Chainsaw class

- a. Martin Thornton and Paul McComisky are scheduled to take a chainsaw safety class through DPW in September where they will become certified.

6. Work projects on the To Do list

- a. Staining of the bog platform and the cleaning and staining of the Little River Kiosk. We decided the weather is too hot and rainy to do these projects this summer and will decide on a September date at our August 30 meeting.
- b. Steve has Thompson Wood Seal that we will use.

7. Budget from 2022/2

Budget 22/23	Propose	Actual
Trail Maintenance	\$1,500	\$707
Kiosks	\$4,050	\$1,132
Maps	\$1,400	\$1,020
Total	\$6,950	\$2,859

- a. We had expected to purchase kiosks which were \$4,050, but Martin Thornton was able to design a kiosk that we could build ourselves for much cheaper.
- b. We replaced Bridge #3 and the Esker Bridge and repaired Bridge #8 (Wheelwright Pond). Martin was able to incorporate leftover wood from other bridges into the Esker Bridge, again saving us money.
- c. We currently have \$477 left in our account.

8. Bridges

- a. Martin Thornton replaced broken planks on Bridge #6 so it should be good until next spring. The wood came from Steve Bullek.
- b. We have three bridges left to replace in the TF.
- c. The Committee was going to put off replacing Bridge #8 on the Wheelwright Pond Trail until next year, but we decided that it is currently a hazard and it didn't make sense to keep replacing boards when others break. We set a date for Sept 16-18 to replace it. Cost to replace it is \$1400.
- d. [Link](#) to bridge specifics

Motion: I make a motion that the Conservation Commission allocate \$1,400 to the Trails Committee to replace Bridge #8 this September.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Trails Committee - we all appreciate it!

Monthly Report for 8/15/23 Lee CC Meeting

Submitted by: Mimi Winder

Topic: Lamprey River Canoe Launch

On 8/8 I checked out the Canoe Launch and on 8/10 Catherine and I returned to further evaluate the site. There is a lot of regrowth. Not surprising because of all the rain this summer. In addition, we noted that the opposite bank is full of gorgeous clethra, something to shoot for!

Action: plan 1 or 2 workdays this fall to continue this mitigation effort

Topic: LCC Contact Information

I have started a spreadsheet of useful contacts and posted it on our shared drive. It is my hope that people will find this useful and will add information that they think would be helpful for others. I have also added D. Genes's spreadsheet with CC members contact information to the shared drive.

Action: Check out the file and update as appropriate

Topic: Minutes for Monitoring Walks

I spoke with Denise and Andy on 8/14. They agreed that minutes are not required for routine monitoring walks, even if a quorum is present.