Lee Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting of October 5, 2020

As this meeting was held electronically, D. Genes began by reading the Right to Know Law checklist:

As Chairperson of the 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 authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone 1-301-715-8592 and entering Meeting ID 83927913609 and Password 816773 or by entering the same information through: zoom.us

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the Town of Lee’s website at: leenh.org

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-234-8194.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting; we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled to another time.

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

Ex Officio: Scott Bugbee

Technical Assistance: Caren Rossi
Approval of Minutes: D. Sugerman moved to accept the minutes of September 14, 2020 as written; D. Shay seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken. All members of the Commission voted to accept, as written, the minutes of September 14, 2020.

REPORTS:
Treasurer’s Report: A. Gourgue reported that the Commission’s account, as of July 2, 2020 was $12,492.22 composed of
- LCC Funds: $9,809.64
- David Allen Funds: $2,682.58

ZBA/Planning Board: A. Tappan reported that no issues had been brought to the Conservation Commission.

Easement Monitoring/Easement Issues: Properties monitored in September: Hutton (9/16); Claridge/Woodall (9/23); Schulz-Friedlander (9/30). Nothing of concern was noted on the Schulz-Friedlander properties. Easement issues for the Hutton property as well as possible violations found with the Claridge/Woodall and Ford properties are as follows:

Hutton Property - Tree cutting, by an abutter on the western and northern boundary of the property, has occurred, and brush piles made which cover the corner pin. In places, the stone wall bounding the property is covered with slash and stumps. D. Genes drafted a letter to the abutters. C. Rossi stated that property owners must clean up slash within a year; she will provide the contact information for the forest ranger for this region of the state. B. Humm will check to see if the stonewall is a scenic asset mentioned in the easement.

Woodall/Claridge Property - An abutter on the property’s east border had trees cut and removed and the persons hired to do the cutting, crossed the boundary and cut trees growing on the easement. D. Genes will write a letter to the abutter.

Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary - Annual monitoring of this property is done by Southeast Land Trust (SELT), and A. Tappan reported that she accompanied SELT personnel in their monitoring session in late September; two tree stands were discovered which may be within the easement. A site visit is needed to determine whether this stand is on the boundary or within the easement. In order to get a site line, two or three people will be needed. A. Tappan and D. Genes planned a site visit on October 7.

Possible CE Violation: S. Bugbee reported that the Select Board is looking for a second legal opinion on the possible easement violation. A. Tappan suggested that, as conservation easements are charitable trusts, it would be worthwhile exploring the NH Attorney General’s Charitable Trust Unit.

Schedule for remaining properties as follows: Brisard (10/7); Daley (10/14); Ellis Oyster River (10/21); Chisholm (10/28); Old Mill (11/4); Verrette (11/11); Powder Major’s Forest will be monitored by D. Sugerman and Martin Castle; Echo Ridge will be monitored by C. Rossi.

Education/Outreach: C. Fisher reported that she had written seven articles that were published in the Commission’s Facebook page and/or in the E-Crier. A. Gourgue reported that the number of people liking the Commission’s Facebook page continues to grow.

OLD BUSINESS:
Trails Guidelines Policy: D. Genes reported that, on September 21, she brought the completed Trails Guidelines Policy before the Select Board which approved it. Posting the policy on the Commission’s web pages, Facebook page and on the E-Crier was discussed. D. Genes reported that she also informed the Board that the Commission is looking into forming a Volunteer Trail Committee.

Proposed Trails Subcommittee: Commission members discussed the potential of such a committee in involving more people in conservation issues. Also discussed was delineating the work of the Commission and that of a volunteer group/subcommittee. D. Genes reported that she’d contacted Malin Clyde, UNH Coop. Ext. Volunteer State Specialist, who cautioned that when trails
look intended, someone steps in the fill the perceived void. Before the Commission voted to create a Trails Volunteer group, A. Tappan suggested deferring details such as what such a group will be called and what their duties might entail. D. Sugerman will prepare, and share with Commission members, the next draft of the prospectus for the Trails Committee for review and that we would vote on it at the next meeting. C. Fisher moved that the Commission create a Trails Volunteer Group.  B. Humm seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and all members of the Commission voted to approve the formation of a Trails Volunteer Group.

**Little River Trail:** The Lamprey River Advisory Committee provided additional funding in the amount of $3750.00 to cover the costs of having the soil scientist, Marc Jacobs, do a site review, survey the site and prepare a wetland assessment report. The permit work for DES has been done. A. Tappan discussed the work that needs to be done to replace the culvert - an aspect of the trail work not covered in M. Jacobs’ evaluation. D. Shay will speak with M. Jacobs to see if replacing the culvert can be addressed in the same DES permit. M. Jacobs’ contract needs to be signed by Select Board Chair, John LaCourse. C. Fisher reported that she had been working on a mock-up of the kiosk sign.

**Trail Maintenance Training:** D. Genes reported that the three hour trail maintenance training workshop will occur on October 25, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the Maud Jones Memorial Forest. The UNH Cooperative Extension Service (CES) will provide all the tools and will lead the session which will involve closing off the steep, rogue trail; creating a new line with a less steep trail; and blazing the trail. The $10.00 participation fee will be waived for Lee residents. CES will advertise in Nature Groupie; the Commission will advertise in the E-Crier and our Facebook page and will get it on Town website calendar. The fee for cohosting this session is $150.00. D. Genes moved that the Commission spend up to $150.00 to cohost a Trail Maintenance for Volunteers Workshop, conducted by CES, on October 25. D. Sugerman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. All members of the Commission voted to approve payment of up to $150.00 to co-host this event.

**Old Mill Reserve, Mowing:** At such time as this mowing is scheduled, a representative from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will not be walking in front of the mower. A. Tappan was asked to contact Steve Bullek to see when he or Peter Hoyt is available to mow a path. One or more Commission members will walk in front of the mower. One log needs to be removed from the trail. Lopping along the trail edges can be done by Commission members sometime after the mowing occurs in October.

**Conservation Commission Projects Underway:**

**Invasive Species Treatments on Town Lands:** B. Humm reported that he and C. Fisher oversaw the treatment, by Biospray, of the old orchard/field in the Town Forest. As well as treating the field, the wooded area between the orchard and Steven’s Field was treated. He reported that he and A. Tappan oversaw Biospray’s treatment along the road at the Rothwell Reserve. A. Tappan reported that there are patches of mature invasive plants along the path that borders the Reserve’s western boundary. She has been marking these plants and recommended that Commission members cut down these mature plants, either this fall or next spring, to be followed by treatment of subsequent regrowth. At the Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary, B. Humm and A. Tappan oversaw Biospray’s treatment of small patches of knotweed along the white fence south of the house and back to the woodland. A. Gourgue requested a motion to pay the invoice from Biospray in the amount of $280.00. D. Genes moved that the Commission approve payment to Biospray in the amount of $280.00. C. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. All members of the Commission voted to approve the $280.00 payment to Biospray.

**Posting of “No Hunting” Signs:** D. Genes reported that she had posted signs in Little River Park and in the Town Forest and has one more sign to post in the Town Forest to the right of the Transfer Station Road. A. Tappan reported that she has signs to post at Joe Ford Wildlife Sanctuary, Maud Jones Memorial Forest, and Lee Five Corners Reserve. D. Shay and D. Sugerman offered to assist posting these.
**Town Office Move:** S. Bugbee reported that the move has been postponed until after the elections in November.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**2021-2022 Budget Request:** The Commission will submit a request in the amount of $7,000 which is based on projected costs including, but not limited to, membership fees with various organizations, rebuilding the bog platform, invasive plant species treatment costs, trail maintenance costs, and sponsoring camperships at Barry Conservation Camp.

**Oyster River Near Old Mill Reserve:** C. Rossi reported that, subsequent to a picture of asphalt dumped in the Oyster River that was posted on the NeighborLee Facebook page; she contacted Dave Price of the Department of Environmental Services. A site visit determined that asphalt had been dumped long ago in, and in the vicinity of, the Oyster River on the Cheney portion of the Town-owned Old Mill Reserve. D. Price said removal likely would cause more harm than good, as the toxins were released long ago. No action will be taken. As NRCS is the easement holder for the property, they will be notified. A. Tappan reported that a trail has been made on the easement from an abutter’s back fence to the easement. Some brush and saplings had been cut down. As the monitoring of this easement will take place in November, this part of the easement can be visited and the situation can then be addressed by letter. S. Bugbee requested that the Select Board receive a copy of this letter.

**NHACC Conference:** The Conference and its workshops will be held remotely this year on November 7. D. Genes suggested that Commission members who will be participating let each other know which workshops they’re planning to attend so as to cover as many different topics as possible.

**Scheduled Commission Meetings for the months ahead:** The Commission agreed on the following dates: Monday, November 9; Monday, December 7; and Monday, January 4.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, November 9, 2020

Submitted by: 

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Catherine Fisher