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CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Boscawen Municipal Complex

Meeting Minutes - Draft
Tuesday, June 20, 2017 @ 7:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Tom Gilmore, Chair, Jeffrey Abbe, Norman LaPierre, Lyman Cousens, Alexandria Kyasky
Guest: Charlie Niebling, Town Forester, Alan Hardy, Planning & Community Development Director, Carol (Bernier) Walter

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Regular Business

- Open by Chair at 7:00 pm
- Roll call by Chair
- Review and Acceptance of the minutes of May 16, 2017. A **motion** to approve the Minutes was made by LaPierre, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.
- Accountant's Report – Total Assets \$131,271.34. The Forester was paid. Alan Hardy noted that there is some recent/planned development. Open space land is being converted and each of those are a 10% penalty. The lots are selling for over \$35,000, so there will be an increase in the amount of money coming in.
- Tom Gilmore will not be here in July. A **motion** to cancel the July 17, 2017 meeting was made by LaPierre, seconded by Abbe and passed by a unanimous vote.

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Old Business:

- Town Forester Charles Niebling made a presentation on Phase I of the Town Forest Timber Inventory and Preliminary Management Recommendations. He lives on Lower Queen Street in Boscawen and has been there since 1988. He served in the late 80's and early 90's on the commission. He's happy to be associated with this piece of land again. He did an Updated Timber Inventory and Preliminary Management Recommendations report. These are preliminary numbers that he is presenting. He measured over 4,000 trees in 3 days. This report is only a draft. He also handed out the presentation to the Commission in print. There are no trails in the Barnard lot. He went through the objectives which included updating the forest inventory, which was last conducted in 2001; re-establishing relationships with NH Fish and Game; update forest and wildlife habitat management recommendations for the next ten years; identify access options and attempt to establish permanent management access options for Armstrong/Ellsworth and Barnard lots; identify new public recreation opportunities; working with stakeholders; and implement management practices. He showed a map of the town forest. He did a variable radius plot sample. He measured all trees greater than 5" dbh. Diameter and height in 16 foot logs was also measured. Product classes also inventoried: veneer, saw timber, pallet, and pulp. Data was analyzed using ForestMetrix Software. The sampling margin of error: +/- 6.0%. He inventoried 358 acres. He did not inventory the far western section of the property. There is beaver flowage there. There is about 48 acres of wetland that he didn't inventory nor did he do the landfill area/Weir Farm homestead site. He explained how he plotted the property. He showed the results in a chart entitled Sawtimber Volumes, Composition. (See handout in record.) He explained the chart. There is a million and a half board feet of white pine timber on the forest property. Saw timber volume per acre is high – 9,200 per acre. Substantial volume of pulp is over 10,000 tons. The town forest is considered over stocked forest with significant mature timber in basal area. The property has 3.2 million board feet on the property. He came up with a saw timber capital

value if you cut every tree, which he is not recommending, and sold every log of \$736,956. He submitted “Proposed Management Recommendations”. He went over the chart and explained it. (The chart was submitted for the record.) There is a stand of old Pine that is in decline in Stand 2 that needs to be harvested. He would suggest taking a good amount in stage 1 and the rest in 10 years in stage 2. Some are 30-32” pine that have some red rot in the butt. He also suggested some “other Management Considerations” (see handout). He spoke with Jeff Abbe about trails and this would be a great opportunity to create more access for people to use. Harvesting gives an opportunity to use skid roads as trails. He went over the next steps; he needs to complete data analysis, meet with NH Fish and Game to discuss management recommendations, schedule BTF walk with Conservation Commission and NH Fish and Game, finalize report and management recommendations; begin research on access; begin planning for initial management practices. Depending on the size of the sale, it would have to be put out to bid and they would have to mark and inventory the lumber.

Tom Gilmore asked if they put it out to bid would they be able to reserve the right to accept or reject bids. Tom Gilmore said there is more value out there than they thought. Lyman Cousin asked if there were any opportunity to expand the town forest. Charlie Niebling said the neighbor expressed some interest in acquiring the Barnard lot through a swap. He said it would take a unique piece of property to make him think about swapping property. Charlie Niebling thought it would be ideal if you could get the owner of JJ Kelley/John Koffman property to sell them a small piece of property to straighten out the Ellsworth line. He said if they did some harvesting in the Barnard lot, there is mature quality timber in there, they could do a temporary right of way agreement with the Corn Hill Road property owner that is currently being logged. Tom Gilmore said the next step would be to do the walk in July. Charlie Niebling suggested either mid to late afternoon i.e. 3-4 in the afternoon or possibly a Saturday morning. It would be easier for Fish and Game to be there during the week. Jeff Abbe said they haven’t had much public outreach to let the public know what is going on. He’d like some help with that. Charlie Niebling said that once the practices are settled, they could do a combo presentation of the plan with a field walk and hold it on a Saturday morning. Norm LaPierre said that in years past they had a day in October that they would do that. Tom Gilmore asked if the Commission wanted to start to consider a timber sale for this coming year. Charlie Niebling said maybe early winter this year, which would give them plenty of time to plan it. The market for white pine logs is pretty good right now. Norm LaPierre asked if Charlie Niebling would mark the trees. Charlie Niebling said yes. He asked the Commission to give him time to finish his product before the Commission made a decision about timber harvesting this year.

Lyman suggested they put a survey out through Survey Monkey asking 4 or 5 direct questions on Facebook where there may be a better response. Alan Hardy said that when the Conservation Commission starts putting it together they need to be aware of their net proceeds and what they will be used for. Tom Gilmore said in the proposal they should include what they expect to do with the proceeds, including improvements in the forest. Norm LaPierre said some good decisions will have to be made. Tom Gilmore asked Charlie Niebling to recommend what trails the Commission should create. Charlie Niebling asked to have until the July walk to finish his management plan and meet with Fish and Game. Lyman Cousens said maybe action could be taken in September. Jeff Abbe talked with Alan Hardy and Charlie Niebling about continuing to work on an access. He’d like Mr. Koffman to come to the meeting and with a third party, possibly Five Rivers, and consider doing a Land Trust. Much discussion ensued.

Tom Gilmore said the Commission needs an opinion from Alan Hardy as to whether it is doable or not to trade off land. Alan Hardy said he would do an opinion in letter form. Tom Gilmore said if it cannot be done legally they could not pursue it further. If it can be done legally, they could talk with Mr. Koffman. Tom Gilmore said they should actively pursue picking up the narrow piece of property that is on the map.

See if it is available or not. Tom Gilmore said it would be taken up again in the August meeting. Charlie Niebling will be back for the August meeting.

- **Hardy Easement:** Alan Hardy submitted an original draft for the Commission to look at dated June 19, 2017. Alan Hardy said once the draft goes to a final draft, then a value will be placed on it. Norm LaPierre asked if it needed to go to town meeting. Alan Hardy said no. Tom Gilmore suggested that the commission should review the draft and take action on it at the August meeting. Any suggestions, email him or Alan Hardy.
- **Snowmobile Trails:** Norm said that the Snowmobile Club will be getting a new president the first of July. Tom Gilmore said Water Street trails may be more problematic as the people he contacted said they wouldn't allow access. Tom Gilmore said their problem is they cannot cross a brook on the south end of Menard's property. Mason Donovan's property may be a better access. Discussion regarding purchasing Walker Pond property. Tom Gilmore said the Commission has an interest in acquiring that property. Tom Gilmore said he'd like it on record that the Commission is interested in that property. Alan Hardy said if the body comes to that position, and they draft up a letter, they could send that letter to the water precinct. Jeff Abbe asked if attending one of their meetings would help. Alan Hardy said that would be the goal. If that land is not acquired by the town, the town will have no access to Walker Pond. Tom Gilmore asked for a motion to assert that the Commission adopt the fact that they are interested in preserving that piece of property and they will so by notify the Water Precinct. A **motion** was made by Cousens that they pursue the possibility of purchasing the property, seconded by LaPierre and passed by a unanimous vote. Jeff Abbe said he'd like to see that soon as Walker Pond has had a lot of activity lately.
- **Town Forest Consolidation:** At a Technical Review Committee it was tabled as there were issues about trading land. Alan Hardy said it should stay tabled until they have a legal position before they can move forward.
- **Town Forest trails sub-committee:** Jeff Abbe thinks they are very close to needing a mowing of the field. He asked Alan Hardy about Bill Walsh mowing the bittersweet. Should they pursue it or stay away from it. He thinks he was willing to go into the farmstead area and mow the dead bittersweet and thinks he'd do it at no cost. Alan Hardy doesn't know if that would be a problem. Tom Gilmore asked if they were ready to contract with John Fife to mow. He also asked if Alexandria's husband wanted to do that. She said if it was open to bid possibly. Tom said he'd like to have John Fife do the Spring mow, have the guy cut the bitter sweet and he would contract with Alex's husband to do the fall mow. Alex said they would be moving in October.
- Lyman Cousens said there were 2 or 3 people interested in the sub-committee. Could they be included in the July walk? Jeff Abbe said yes.
- Jeff Abbe said Carol Bernier Walter was here to introduce herself. He late husband owned the Bernier lot. The Commission has shown interest in purchasing the lot in the past. Jeff Abbe said they contacted her a year or two ago to discuss it with her. Carol asked if she would be penalized for the property being in Current Use. Tom Gilmore said no. Jeff Abbe explained. Alan Hardy said the lot is non-convertible as there is no frontage. Carol said it was land locked. Tom Gilmore said they could only offer her fair market value. Alex asked if the subject could be tabled to the next meeting so she could see the map.

A **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm was made by Alex Kyasky, seconded by Lyman Cousens and passed by a unanimous vote.

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145 **Next Meeting:** August 15, 2017 at 7pm.
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148 *Respectfully submitted,*
149 *Rose Fife*

DRAFT