

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Boscawen Municipal Complex

June 16 2020 @ 7:00 pm

Present: Thomas Gilmore, Chair, Jeffrey Abbe, Lyman Cousens, Mark Kaplan, Henry Carrier.

Absent: Norman LaPierre, Ed Cherian Jr., Brendon Jackson

Staff Present: Kellee Jo Easler, Planning & Community Development Director, Kearsten O'Brien, Planning & Community Development Clerk, Rose Fife, Recording Secretary

Guest: Forester Charlie Niebling

Due to the Covid-19/Corona Virus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board was authorized to meet electronically. The Town of Boscawen utilized the GoToMeeting platform.

Regular Business:

- Open by Chair • 7:00 pm
- Roll call taken by Chair
- Review and Acceptance of the Minutes of the April 21, 2020 meeting: Cousens asked for amendments. Line 38 says Cathleen Paine is the daughter of Jim Colby. He'd like it changed to read that Cathleen Paine is the daughter of the late Jim Colby. Line 58 'descent' should be decent. Line 63 the word 'grave' should be 'gravel'. Line 77 the word 'relief' should be 'relieve'. A **motion** to accept the Minutes from April 21, 2020 as amended was made by Cousens and seconded by Abbe. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Gilmore, Abbe, Cousens, and Kaplan. NAY: none. Motion passed unanimously.
- Accountant's Report: Balance sheet for Conservation Commission shows the money due the Commission from the general fund. Besides that money, they have \$207,370.62 in that account now. The payout for the easement should go out soon. The balance sheet from the Town Forest account shows \$29,071.55 The profit and loss shows a \$2,456.37 payout. Dues were paid to Contoocook North Branch Local Advisory Committee of \$100.00.

Old Business:

- Natural Resource Update – Gilmore authorized a check to be written to NRA. Abbe reported that they received a final draft from Central NH Regional Planning Commission. He hopes the town is happy with the product that they receive at a cost of \$4,000. He'd like to see it get on line before September and have a meeting with the Planning Board to do their presentation. Gilmore asked Easler to bring it up to the Planning Board so they can schedule a joint meeting. Easler reported that they will try to combine the meetings. They will do a public hearing later this year. They are going to try to do them all at once for the acceptance into the master plan. This would be part of the natural resource chapter. She would be happy to schedule something with the Planning Board if they would like ahead of that meeting. Kaplan would like the Commission to take a position and underline sub priorities prior to speaking to the Planning Board. There are set of objectives on page 7 and 8 of the report that frame things nicely as well as a set of recommendations. The Planning Board has a role because it goes with the Master Plan. There is some room for the Commission to take a position around some things i.e. water. There is a chance for the Commission to think about how to engage the public. Gilmore felt that makes a lot of sense

50 but thinks they should let the Planning Board start making their plans. The Commission can
51 schedule that talk sometime in July. Kaplan agreed. Cousens would like to read it individually
52 and in July physically get together and go over it. Gilmore wanted to put that on their personal
53 agendas to read the report thoroughly for discussion in July. The report was dispersed to the
54 commission via email. O'Brien will copy the report and mail it out to the commission.
55

56 Discussion Items Town Forest: Naming of the new town forest was discussed. One suggestion
57 Gilmore heard was the Royal Forest. Abbe suggested something Royal or Regal as it's between
58 King and Queen Streets. Or they could put it out to the town as a contest. Gilmore asked if they
59 could put a survey monkey out to the town to come up with a name. He likes Regal Forest for the
60 new town forest. They can call the current forest the Weir Road Town Forest as it's off of Weir
61 Road. Abbe thinks that they should include the town in naming the new forest. Carrier suggested
62 the Knowlton Hill Town Forest as the hill has been known as Knowlton Hill for a long time. Or
63 the Native American forest as there are some historic sites in there. Gilmore thinks they should
64 do a survey monkey with several of these suggestions to choose from. Cousens suggested they
65 ask the elementary school kids. They can contact Kim Kenney who is a teacher there would
66 probably help them. Gilmore suggested Cousens make contact with the teacher. Cousens will run
67 it by her. Gilmore suggested that the Commission email him their suggestions. Do not send as a
68 quorum. Abbe thinks they should put it out to a broader audience. Abbe suggested the NewsVine.
69 O'Brien will put it on the town website and will speak with Katie Phelps about putting it on the
70 town Facebook page as well. Gilmore said this is for the new forest only.
71

72 Abbe met with the highway department on Monday Morning. Together they met with the DOT
73 representative who does the driveway permits. The two granite stones at the entry to the new forest
74 are 10.5 feet apart and need to be opened up to be 18-20 feet apart with taking out minimum trees.
75 No culvert is needed. The grade that is there needs to be met. They will use inch and a half gravel
76 stone base. They have marked out a parking area that will hold 5 cars and a kiosk across from
77 Marshall's. To create that it will take 8-9 truckloads of gravel. They would like to ask for
78 donations. Hopefully GMI will give them a 50% discount. Niebling was in touch with Warren
79 Colby of GMI and they will meet out there early next week. GMI seems to be inclined to either
80 donate the entire quantity of gravel or a discount or perhaps free trucking. Mr. Colby wanted to
81 see the site so he can estimate the amount of gravel needed. Gilmore asked if anyone spoke with
82 the road agent to see if they could get some help. Easler spoke with Hardy about it and they will
83 look at it on the 25th of June at the Board of Selectmen meeting. Gilmore wanted to suggest they
84 allocate some funds to this project. He'd like to suggest they allocate up to \$6,000 from the Forest
85 Account to accomplish this. The estimates he saw were less than that. Niebling said he put a
86 budget estimate together that assumed donations. The major out of pocket cost would be the gravel
87 at \$270 a load. His budget was around \$2,500 to \$3,000. Hopefully Boscawen DPW will help.
88 Niebling will donate the tree cutting. He'd like to also donate a nice sign to hangout on Route 3
89 similar to the one he did for the Weir Road Town Forest. The construction of the kiosk may have
90 some out of pocket cost to it. They sign would probably be 4' x 3'. They will also want the ability
91 to restrict vehicle access beyond the parking area. The \$6,000 figure is generous. Abbe suggested
92 \$5,000. Easler said that public works is down 2 people so she is not sure how available they will
93 be but she will check into it.
94

95 A **motion** to allocate up to \$6,000 towards the new town forest project was made by Gilmore and
96 seconded by Abbe. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Gilmore, Abbe, Cousens, Kaplan, and Carrier. NAY:
97 none. Motion passes.
98

Abbe has noticed that quite a few folks have been out to the balancing rock and there has been some abuse to that rock. They could decommission the trail if they cannot get it under control. There is a sign up there saying they should not climb or step on the rock or liken. He reset the sign on Monday on a different tree further away. He will monitor it closely. Carrier thought perhaps they should put a trail camera out there as there is a liability to the town if someone gets hurt. Abbe thought it was a good idea. Cousens had concern with people stealing the camera. Kaplan thought a camera wouldn't hurt but perhaps they should look at the sign and make it a more educational sign vs. 'do not do it' kind of sign. Abbe thought perhaps a mini kiosk about what kind of Liken it is. Niebling would not be opposed to decommissioning that trail. The trail hasn't been there that long that a Treadway has been beaten down. It would be a shame if it was destroyed. They could put the coordinates in the kiosk for people to get to the balancing rock. Gilmore agreed that they will not be able to stop people from climbing on it. Kaplan supports that. Abbe felt it would be easy to decommission that trail especially with the new Boscawen Hill Loop they've built. Gilmore thought they should plan on doing that. No formal action is needed. Abbe has been working with Ashton at Avitar and she is working up the GPS points and also updating their maps. He should be hearing something from her soon. They can decommission the balancing rock trail now. Gilmore agreed. Niebling noted that signs will need to be changed. Abbe asked if they should wait until next month and decommission those signs and place new signs up. Abbe asked if they should put this out to the public about the misuse. The commission felt they should just do it. Abbe was up at the Forest and he thinks within a week or so they should hire John Fife to mow the farmstead area and landfill area. The farmstead area is almost hip high right now. A **motion** to hire John Fife to mow was made by Abbe and seconded by Gilmore. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Abbe, Cousens, Kaplan, Gilmore, Carrier. NAY: none. Abbe will contact him in a week or two.

Abbe spoke regarding the Creaser property. Niebling felt that they should notify the property owner about the trail that passes through the property. They should let them know they are considering parking and a trail head for pedestrian, non-motorized use. The trail passes about 4 or 5 private land owners. Easler thought 6. Gilmore agreed that they should notify private property owners. Abbe asked Easler to get a list of abutters together and send them to Niebling.

Gilmore asked Easler if the property survey had been done yet. Easler said not yet. There are some encroachment issues there. Abbe believes there is an outstanding item with Web Stout's survey. The corner pins haven't been set yet.

Easler wanted to recommend that they do action items in the Minutes. This will create a list of items that were agreed to be done by each person. Easler will follow up with Fife.

New Business:

- None.

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Cousens and seconded by Kaplan. Roll Call Vote: AYE: Gilmore, Abbe, Cousens, Kaplan and Carrier. NAY: none. Motion passes.

Next Meeting: • July 21, 2020

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Fife, Recording Secretary*

ACTIONS from June 16, 2020
Conservation Commission Meeting

- Easler: 1. Talk to Planning Board to schedule a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.
2. Discuss with Board of Selectmen the possibility of DPW helping with drive access to the Creaser Town Forest at the 6.25.20 meeting. Also discuss boundary plan and encroachment. 3. Send a list of Creaser Property (83/7) abutters to Niebling and Abbe.
- O'Brien: 1. Mail out copies of NRI and map info to Commission.
2. Put Survey on Town website about naming the Creaser Town Forest.
3. Talk to Katie Phelps about putting survey about naming the Creaser Town Forest on Facebook Page.
- Cousens: Talk with Kim Kenney about getting the kids involved with naming the new town forest.
- Abbe: Talk to John Fife about mowing the Weir Road Town Forest and the areas to be mowed.
- Gilmore: Contact snowmobile club regarding abutters to 83/7.
- All Commissioners: Read report sent out by O'Brien and be ready to discuss in July.
- Abbe & Niebling: Brief Educational Sign with coordinates to balancing rock & decommission trail