

Minutes for the 4 February 2015
Alexandria Conservation Commission*

Meeting called to order at 18:51 by Chairwomen Kate Barrett

Members Present: Kate Barrett, Jenny Tuthill, Ernie Lamos, Bob Piehler, Steve Whitman, and George Whittaker

Members Absent: Don Gagnon; there was no representative from the BOS present

Financials: 2015 operating budget is pending approval. The proposed budgeted amount for the Conservation Commission shown in the 2015 town budget was incorrect; the budget will be amended to reflect the correct amount of \$1310.00 before being moved to the ballot. The 2014 operating budget had an ending balance of \$240.13, which **will not** be carried forward to the 2015 budget. The Conservation Fund had a balance of \$22,750.14 as of 12/31/2014, with an additional \$2,500 due from 2 properties being removed from "current use" status.

The minutes of the 10 December 2014 meeting were amended, and the amended minutes were approved and will be sent to the town Administrative Assistant.

Permits: NHDES File #2014-003384; Lincoln Map 201, Lots 09 & 91 Standard Dredge & Fill. While the Conservation Commission does not have jurisdiction in this matter, we have been monitoring the site. The DES wrote to the Lincoln's on 2 January 2015 outlining concerns they had with the application, and gave the Lincoln's until 2 March 2015 to provide the additional information required, or the permit would be denied. The Commission is satisfied that the DES has the situation well under control; however, we will continue to monitor the site.

Old Business

- The new road ordinance for Bog Rd. proposed by the Commission and presented to the BOS is still under review.
- Funding for the building of a Kiosk on the town property in the bog has been included in the proposed 2015 town budget.
- Designating the town owned Chapman property [aka the Pitman Lot] as a Town Forest will appear as warrant article #10 on the town ballot, 10 March 2015.
- Jenny Tuthill will draft a letter for the Commission to send to the BOS requesting that they contact the National Grid regarding the Warrant Article passed by the town in 1971 prohibiting spraying under the power lines. The letter will contain the Grid contact information: Joshua Holden, Environmental Scientist, National Grid, 40 Sylvan Rd., Waltham, MA, 02451.

New Business

- The NHACC has requested that conservation members provide them with contact information so that they can send informational material via email directly to our members. ACC members furnished the information requested and it will be sent to the NHACC.
- The Audubon Society will conduct its spring survey Feb. 14th & 15th. Kate provided interested members with instructions and recording sheets. If additional people are interested in participating, contact Kate.
- ACC members reconsidered our decision not to renew our membership with the NHANRS and decided that the information the organization provided was worth the \$25 even if our members chose not to attend any of the NHANRS's events. The invoice will be forwarded for payment out of the 2015 operating budget.
- Trout Unlimited is interested in learning more about the Patten Brook restoration project. Restoration is needed upstream from the bridge on Bog Rd to an area along Patten Brook toward bridge at Town garage. An initial study of the area was conducted by Right Angle Engineering and they presented a proposal with an estimated cost of about \$15,000. Since the initial assessment by Right Angle Engineering, the ACC has learned that Tout Unlimited has an interest in helping with the restoration, and

can provide professional resources and grant money at no cost to the town. This information was passed on to the BOS who have asked that we investigate this further and get back with them with our findings and a recommendation(s). Steve Whitman will do some additional research and put together an informational summary for presentation at the 9 Feb. BOS meeting. The involvement of Trout Unlimited in the project could result in a significant savings to the town; however, before moving forward, we need to understand each step involved in the process and the specific responsibilities of all parties concerned, and be sure that there is total agreement so no one is working at cross purposes. As a note of caution, it should be understood that the NHDES will be aware of the project and failure not to comply with all governing regulations and safeguards could result in fines being levied against the town. Trout Unlimited brings professional experience in river and stream restoration to the table and is familiar with the process.

- The town of Orange Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board recently held a joint informal meeting to discuss how Orange plans to handle the EDPR Spruce Ridge project. Local area towns were invited – Alexandria was represented by selectmen George Tuthill and Don Sharp, and ACC members Kate Barrett and Jenny Tuthill. It was considered a good meeting and opened the door for future joint meetings to present a united front against further wind farm development in the area. After the meeting, Kate had an opportunity to speak with Nancy Watson [Groton CC] and Dorothy Hendricks [Orange CC] about the possibility of organizing regional conservation commission meetings – all agreed that this would be a good idea; however, nothing beyond that was discussed.
- Grafton County plant sale is underway. Feedback from members who have purchased plants here in the past spoke well of the plant quality and survival rate. Plants can be ordered now for delivery in the spring; contact Kate for more information.
- Boyd Smith will give an abbreviated overview of the Newfound Lake Watershed Master Plan prepared by Dan Sundquist at the Alexandria Planning Board meeting 18 Feb. This is excellent information and ACC members are encouraged to attend. The ACC is planning to sponsor a more detailed presentation by Mr. Smith for the entire town in April.
- Members of the ACC were invited to attend the Jan. 2015 meeting of the newly reformed Groton Conservation Commission. The ACC was asked to provide the GCC with information and pointers that would help them as they moved forward with the new group. Among the information shared was some of the basic tools needed such as the *Handbook for NH Municipal Conservation Commissions* provided by the NHACC, key contacts at the DES and other organizations, and tips for completing an NRI for the town. It was a good meeting and helped forge a strong working relationship between the two commissions.

All Other Business

- Jenny Tuthill discussed the establishing of ‘public educational events’. A list of possible activities along with tentative dates was drawn up. Jenny will put together a more formal list for consideration at our 25 Feb. meeting. There was a brief discussion about town/ACC liability exposure if the town/ACC “sponsored” an event.
- Steve Whitman stated that his article on floodplains was scheduled to be published in the Record Enterprise next month, and requested that if anybody had comment or suggestions they get them to him by 25 Feb.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:43

Respectfully Submitted

Steve Whitman, Secretary
Alexandria Conservation Commission

*These minutes are considered a draft until approved at a regular ACC meeting

