

## Minutes for the 2 December 2015 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

**Call meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Erie Lamos at 18:35

**Members present:** Tom Larson, Jenny Tuthill, Steve Whitman, Ernie Lamos, and George Whittaker. Bob Piehler was present as a representative from the BOS for the initial 40 minutes of the meeting, but had to leave because of a prior commitment.

**Excused:** Dave Chapman, Andrea Tuthill

**Financials:** Operating: The 2015 operating budget balance as of 30 November 2015 was (118.15). An additional \$580.00 is available to us, although not reflected in the budget due to a typographical error in the town budget. We feel that the true balance of \$461.85 should be reflected when reporting budget performance, and any documents used in conjunction with the preparation of the 2016 Operating Budget be adjusted to reflect the 2015 Conservation Commission Operating Budget as \$1,210. The Conservation Fund had a balance of \$23,317.23 as of 30 September 2015 with an additional \$1,000 balance due from 2 properties recently removed from "current use".

**Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from 28 October 2015; a motion to accept the minutes without change was made by Jenny and 2<sup>nd</sup> by George – motion carried unanimously. Approved copies will be sent to the Administrative Assistant and replace all "draft copies".

**Permits:** None.

### Old Business

- The ACC will contact Colin Lawson at Trout Unlimited again the end of October, and report at the November meeting as to the status of TU's ability to provide support for the Patten Brook restoration project. Mr. Lawson has not yet been contacted; Ernie will attempt to contact him, and report at the January meeting.
- At the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting it was agreed to name the town owned, reclaimed area in the bog in recognition of Kate Barrett's long service to the town as a member of the Conservation Commission. Dave Gagne has agreed to design and build the kiosk on the site and others will donate the materials. The kiosk will be placed this spring.
- Ernie suggested that we create the position of "Treasurer" on the Commission. It was decided to name Andrea Tuthill as head of the 'Financial Advisory Committee'. This individual [or anyone else on the Commission] will not have the authority to issue checks; they will keep track of Commission income and expenses and monitor monies within the Conservation Fund and Yearly Operating Budget. Bylaws will not require changing as the result of this designation as this is not an elected position.
- Jenny offered the suggestion that the commission should consider having a half day work session during which we would brainstorm ideas and developed short and long term projects and objectives for the commission. Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative Extension, has agreed to facilitate a session to help us establish a plan. Jenny will email us a list of available dates.
- The December 2015 ACC mtg. has been cancelled. Our next scheduled mtg. will be 27 January 2016.

### New Business

The ACC proposed 2016 Operating Budget of \$1,700 was presented to the BOS on 11/3/2015. Ernie responded to several questions from the BOS, and the budget proposal was accepted by the BOS as presented. The 2015 Operating Budget is somewhat distorted as the 2015 Budgeted amount should reflect \$1,210 not \$630 (see "Financials" above). The Commission is concerned that the apparent budget amount for 2015 of only \$630 will have a negative impact on our ability to gain approval for the requested \$1,700 for 2016, and plans to meet with the BOS and Budget Committee to be sure they understand that the \$630 is not the correct 2015 budgeted amount, and to be sure that the correct amount appears on any documents associated with development and

presentation of the Town and/or The Conservation Commission 2016 budget, including the 2016 budgeted amount in the event of a "default budget".

The ACC annual report for inclusion in the Town Report is due Jennifer D. by 1/28/ 2016. Anyone who has ideas as to what ACC accomplishments in 2015 should be included should get them to Steve no later than 12/16. A draft will be circulated for comments before submitting it for publication.

Jeff Littleton from Moosewood Ecological has advised us that the approximate cost to complete the NRI for the remainder of the town including the Fowler River and the Smith River will be 5 -6 thousand dollars depending on exactly what we end up doing. It was agreed that \$8,000.00 be set aside and earmarked in the Conservation Fund for completion of this work. Jenny will check to see if we need to put this out for competitive bids as it will exceed the \$5,000 threshold requiring bids. Steve pointed out that while technically it may be required to put it out for bids, it makes no sense to bring another person in, as Jeff did the Patten Brook NRI, and already has 80% of the data needed to complete job; a new vendor would need to start from square one all over again. Steve has agreed to take responsibility for seeing that the NRI is completed as mandated by state statutes.

Brief overviews of the recent NHACC annual meeting held 7 November at Pembroke in Concord were presented by: Steve, Jenny, and George. All agreed that meeting was worthwhile, and all brought back ideas that could be implemented immediately at little or no cost.

Establish a Junior Commission Membership category. The position should be limited to no more than two (2) individuals between the ages of 12 and 18 and have a term of 1 year. Further, the individual(s) shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen and be a non-voting position. Motion made by Steve 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jenny to establish the category of Junior Commission Membership to be filled by a resident of Alexandria between the ages of 12 and 18. The position requires the approval of the BOS and the term shall be for a period of one (1) year subject to annual renewal. Steve will write letter to BOS requesting their concurrence. This will require a change in our Bylaws.

The Alexandria Recreational Advisory Council has expanded its program to include workshops once a week where individuals are invited to make presentations to the group of children and their parents. Topics include helpful information about Budgeting, Cooking, Canning & Freezing, etc.; basically anything that provides a chance to get together and interact with children, talk, and exchange ideas. A motion made by Jenny 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom to contact Lorraine Jones, Director, ARAC for more details as to how the ACC might get involved. Motion carried unanimously; Steve will contact Lorraine.

2016 - Field Training Series Workshop Planning - NHACC has begun planning its annual Field Training Series workshops. Is the ACC interested in hosting a workshop using the town forest for or perhaps approach someone in town who has conserved their property? Steve will contact Nik for more information and determine exactly what's involved from an ACC and property owner's prospective.

The position of Vice Chairman needs to be filled. Tom nominated Jenny Tuthill for the position of Vice-Chairman, George 2<sup>nd</sup>. Jenny was elected by unanimous vote. Jenny will serve in that capacity for the unexpired term of Bob Piehler until elections are held in April 2016. The primary responsibility of this position is to assist the Chairman in conducting the business of the Commission and to act on behalf of the Chairman in his/her absents.

Bog Rd. maintenance committee. Create a group of individuals, under the direction of an ACC member to monitor and remove trash from Bog Rd. Considerable discussion resulting is numerous considerations surfacing. Additional discussion was deferred to a future meeting.

## **Town Forest Update**

It was a quiet month at the town forest. The surveyed boundaries were defined more clearly by volunteers from the commission. Jenny advised us that we need to start keeping track of volunteer hours spent on conservation projects as they play a role in eligibility for grant money.

### **Other Business**

There was discussion about joining the American Chestnut Foundation. It was decided that more research was needed to determine the appropriate level of membership and how we would directly benefit from joining the organization. Members were requested to review the organization's website for more information <http://www.acf.org/>.

Jenny made the suggestion that the ACC sponsor a photo contest [perhaps with the theme of "The Four Season's In Alexandria"] with the winning pictures used to create an ACC calendar. Jenny will coordinate activity.

Work party was scheduled for Tues., 12/8, at 10:00am to remove knotweed from the Barrett Park area off Bog Rd. This is not an ACC meeting [non-ACC members are encouraged to join the group], and no ACC business will be discussed or acted upon.

**Note:** *It was implied during the discussions at the meeting, that we should make full use of our newly created facebook page to promote and update activities involving the ACC. A reminder of the facebook availability will be put in every monthly newsletter article beginning with January 2016.*

There being no further business brought before the commission, a motion was made by Steve, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 21:05. Our next scheduled meeting is January 27th at 6:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Steve Whitman, Secretary  
Alexandria Conservation Commission