

Minutes of the 25 February 2015 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting*

Call meeting to Order at 19:00 by Chairwomen Kate Barrett

Members present: Kate Barrett, Steve Whitman, George Whittaker, Bob Piehler, Don Gagnon, and Ernie Lamos

Excused: Jenny Tuthill

Absent: there was no representative from the BOS present for this meeting

Financials: Operating: 2015 operating budget is pending approval. The proposed budgeted amount for the Conservation Commission shown in the 2015 town budget was incorrect. Because of the timing, the budget **will not** be amended to reflect the correct amount of \$1210.00. The Conservation Fund had a balance of \$22,750.14 as of 12/31/2014 [1/31/2015 statement was not readily available], with an additional \$2,500 due from 2 properties being removed from "current use" status.

The Minutes from 02/04/2015 Meetings were approved without change and are no longer consider a "draft"

Permits: None

Old Business

- ✓ Status of adjustment to ACC Operating Budget adjustment on 2015 ballot – It is too late to correct the budget; however, we have been assured that the full \$1210.00 will be available as our 2015 operating budget.
- ✓ Recommendations for further ordinances for Bog Rd. are still under review by the BOS – Revised ordinances suggested by the commission are still under review by the BOS
- ✓ It is hoped that the kiosk can be built over the winter and the project completed in the spring - Project status has not changed; we still need material funding estimates and establish a construction timeline.
- ✓ Jenny submitted letter on behalf of CC RE: encouragement to BOS to write letter to National grid opposition to spraying as stated in 1971 Warrant – Apparently there were 3 warrant articles banning spraying to control vegetation growth under the power lines; each warrant addressed a specific chemical. It has been reported that the National Grid no longer uses those chemicals; and spraying with other chemicals was not addressed by these warrants. There was recollection that a 4th warrant article was introduced in the early 1980's banning all spraying of any type under the power lines; George Whittaker is researching the existence of a 4th warrant article; however, no letter has been set to the National Grid and currently, only the abutting property owners can prevent the spraying by responding to "an intent to spray" notification letter sent in advance by the National Grid [there were comments from an abutting property owner, that the notification letter was not sent far enough in advance to allow for response]. There was also discussion concerning the killing of blueberry bushes, apple trees, and "tea" berry plants under and adjoining the right-of-way. The fact that there is a significant amount of ledge which prohibits absorption and filtering of these chemicals, and allows the spray to 'meander' to areas outside of the right-of-way boundary is of concern to the conservation commission, as is the use of chemicals that kill food sources for both humans and animal wildlife.
- ✓ Partnering with Trout Unlimited to perform the restoration work needed on Pattern Brook. Steve Whitman did some additional research and put together an informational summary which was read at the 9 Feb. BOS meeting. The involvement of Trout Unlimited in the project could result in a significant savings to the town. The BOS is drafting a letter to Trout Unlimited expressing their interest – The town administrative assistant was on vacation and there was no BOS representative at the meeting, so it could not be confirmed that the letter has been sent to Trout Unlimited as yet.
- ✓ Boyd Smith presentation to the APB was excellent. The ACC is considering sponsoring a more detailed presentation for the town with Dan Sunquist the author in July – There was good feedback on the presentation by Boyd to the APB.

- ✓ An advertisement for anyone interested in joining the ACC as an Alternate will appear in the March newsletter article. Anyone interested is advised to contact any ACC member or email the Conservation Commission @metrocast.com – Steve advise people that this would be in the March town newsletter and to be ready should they receive inquires
- ✓ 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 – Kate will send renewal form to Jennifer for payment when Jennifer returns from vacation. Steve also passed around information on the NHANRS upcoming workshop on "Understanding Wildlife Corridors in NH" on 27 March in Lebanon. Anyone interested should contact Kate or Steve.
- ✓ 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 – Jenny was ill and unable to attend the meeting. The agenda item was moved to 25 March mtg.

New Business

- 1) Voting Day will give the CC notice if we are to prepare for working on the specifics of a Town Forest – ACC stands ready to assist the BOS with the management of the "Town Forest" should Warrant Article #10 be approved, and the BOS requests our assistance.
- 2) Steve has written a brief letter to the editor of the Record Enterprise explaining Town Forests and requesting the residents support Warrant Article #10 – Letter should appear in either the 2/26 or 3/5 edition of the Record Enterprise.
- 3) Steve recently sent a copy of the newsletter article on the Emerald Ash Beetle to the NHACC as this was the topic for their recent workshop. The article was favorably received and will be used in the workshop and be posted on the NHACC website. A copy of the entire January 2015 ACC newsletter was also provided, and will be posted on their website as an example for other CC use if they're looking for ideas – Steve explained how this came about to the members. He also explained in a little more detail about Alexandria Conservation Commission's involvement as part of a group of area CCs participating in "Conservation Matters", a monthly article written by alternating commissions and appearing in the Record Enterprise's 2nd or 3rd weekly edition. Alexandria's contribution is scheduled for March.

All other business that may come before the Commission

No other business was brought forth

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 20:01

Respectfully Submitted

Steve Whitman, Secretary
Alexandria Conservation Commission

*These minutes are considered to be a draft copy until approved at a regular Alexandria Conservation Commission meeting.