

Minutes from the 24 June 2020 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

These minutes are considered a draft copy until approved at the next scheduled Commission Meeting

Call meeting to order at 18:40 by Chairman Ernest Lamos

Members Present: Ernest Lamos, Steve Whitman (via conference call), Jennifer Tuthill, and Deb Donohue. Deb Donohue was appointed by Chairman Ernest Lamos to act on behalf of Ron Maclean for the duration of the meeting.

Excused: Ron Maclean and Dilys Morris

Absent: Merry Ruggirello and George Whittaker

BOS representative: Bob Piehler was not available, and the BOS was not represented

Guests: Audrey West, NLRA and Peter Donohue, consultant for webpage development

*Kim Sharp's 3 yr. term has expired, and he has chosen not to request a re-appointment. Our thanks to Kim for his dedicated service and his positive impact as a member of the Commission and our town.

- ❖ Approve minutes from 26 February 2020 mtg. A motion to approve the minutes from the 26 February mtg. without change was made by Ernest Lamos, 2nd by Jennifer Tuthill. Motion passed unanimously.
- ❖ Approve minutes from the January 2020 mtg. (minutes were not available at Feb. mtg.). Minutes have not yet been located.
- ❖ Financials: 2020 Operating budget. Balance as of 5/28/2020 was \$1414. A motion was made to accept the financial report as presented by Steve Whitman, 2nd Jennifer Tuthill. Motion passed unanimously.

Permits:

- ❖ Excavating permit to Carol Concrete was reviewed for info only; no action required.
- ❖ Wetlands permit for work on the Bailey Rd. bridge was signed by Ernest Lamos prior to the 24 June mtg.

Old Business

1. Status of benches honoring Kate Barrett and Janet Towse in Barrett Park – Kim Sharp.

Kim has completed both benches and placed them in Barrett Park. Jennifer Tuthill has taken pictures and will send them the Kate and Janet's family. Jennifer and Ernie will establish the value of materials used, and the Commission will consider reimbursement options to Kim at our July mtg. Jennifer will draft a letter for member approval expressing our thanks to Kim for all he has done for the Commission and the town.

2. Status of game cameras to monitor Barrett Park – Ron Maclean

Ron has purchased the camera; however, after further evaluation, it was felt that a camera in the area could not be secured and there was a high risk of damage or theft. Ron will keep the camera and not be reimbursed.

3. Coordination of efforts with Newfound Lake Regional Association; conservation crews for summer projects – Ernie Lamos

Audrey West from NLRA was a guest at the June mtg. and was able to provide information regarding projects the volunteer crews would take on and the process required to get things started. Alexandria had 2 projects under consideration: controlling Japanese Knotweed in Barrett Park and maintaining current trails and creating new trails in the Town Forest. Audrey stated that the NLRA was looking into the control of knotweed, but at this time no decisions had been made and they were not actively getting involved with the removal and control process. However, they were happy to share any of their findings if requested. Trail maintenance was something they were doing this summer, and Audrey suggested that we contact Andrew Veilleux, NLRA with our proposal. Ernie will work with Jennifer to draw up a proposal and circulate it to members for comment before presenting it as a formal request.

4. Clean-Up days for 2020 – Ernie Lamos

The Commission decided not to hold formal clean-up activities because of the risk factor presented by COVID-19. We will informally support voluntary efforts by residents who wish to pick-up roadside trash by supplying blue trash bags, and loaning trash picker devices and safety vests. Residents can contact any member of the Commission to arrange to borrow equipment.

5. Status of protecting town owned property(s) for conservation purposes a warrant article was to be drafted to require that any land owned by the town would need to be evaluated by the conservation commission to determine conservation interests/concerns before it could be put up for auction (suggested wording is contained in the Handbook for Conservation Commissions) – Bob Piehler/Steve Whitman

Steve reported that warrant articles should be presented to the BOS by mid-October 2020 for their approval and support. In the event the BOS elect not to formally support the warrant, we have the option of submitting a petitioned warrant article which needs to be submitted to Town Hall by mid-January 2021. Suggested wording for the warrant article is in the NH Conservation Handbook and Commission members were encouraged to read it and make suggestions to Steve. The final article will be distributed to Commission members for approval prior to being presented to the BOS.

6. Status of Website development by Peter Donohue – Steve Whitman

Steve indicated that the new webpage was not intended to substitute as a social media vehicle, but rather to provide information about the Commission and project with which we are involved. Peter Donohue who is designing the new webpage reviewed the project summary update documents which had been circulated several days prior to the mtg. Comments were favorable and no suggestions were made. It was decided that Steve and Peter should move forward in accordance with the presented format. Commission members will be asked to provide input in the form of articles, pictures, etc. to help flesh out the page. We want to have a demo presentation ready for the August 2020 mtg. with a launch date in October 2020.

New Business

1. Any other business that may be presented by the commission or attendees.

Last winter it was planned to make improvements to the logging road and parking area servicing the Town Forest. Gravel was to be dumped and spread with the idea being that it would sink into the road as the snow melted. Jennifer indicated that this apparently did not happen, and that the area needs considerable work. Jennifer has taken on the responsibility for working with those involved to move this project forward – Jennifer Tuthill

Steve again brought up the fact that response to emails was still sporadic at best with a couple of notable exceptions. He again requested that Commission members check their emails on a timely and regular basis. Emails provide a record of communications, as well as the ability to deliver needed information rapidly – Commission members

2. Election of officers for 2020 – 2021 and review of Bylaws – Steve Whitman/Ernie Lamos

It was decided that because of the number of Commission members not in attendance, the review of Bylaws and election of officers was tabled until the July 2020 mtg. A suggestion by Steve to hold the elections electronically was rejected as it was felt that many Commission members either did not have computer access or did not access their computer on a regular basis.

A motion was made by Jennifer Tuthill, 2nd by Deb Donohue to adjourn the meeting at 19:47. Motion passed unanimously. Our next scheduled meeting will be 29 July 2020