

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes December 13, 2023

Present: Kathi Bradt, Gregg Thibodeau, Scott Travers, Rob Traver, Robin Ungeheuer, Mark Girard, Janet Slocum

Absent:, Jennifer Bland

Public: Steve Murray

Meeting opened 7pm.

Motion made (Scott) to approve minutes of November 08, 2023; seconded (Rob). Motion passed.

Organizational

- **Funds/Budget**

- Forest Maintenance Fund \$3,908.67 (Nov)
- Conservation Land Use Fund \$16,511.60 (Nov)
- 2024 Budget Review recommendations:
 - **Action:** Robin to research 4 or 6 options for a turbidity meter (rent and purchase)
 - **Action:** Gregg to add in a line item for \$700 for survey boundary stakes for Acworth properties.
- 2023 Crescent Lake Testing and Lab \$338
 - It was agreed that the ConCom should be paying Acworth's fair share of the lab fees which is \$225.
 - **Action:** Gregg to submit invoice to Charlotte for payment out of our Conservation Land Use fund.
 - **Action:** Gregg to submit revised budget to town administrator

- **Conservation Plan**

- **Action:** Gregg to send a link to the conservation plan.
- **Action:** Kathi to create a short introductory summary that explains the Conservation Plan.
- Overall plan updates and priorities (Gregg)
 - **Action:** Members to review the focus areas and priority topics for the 5 high value areas.
 - **Action:** Review the 5 HVA's and develop specific goals for each area at our next meeting.
- Geology, Soils (Robin)
 - **Action:** Members to review the geology/soils write up and provide feedback prior to our next meeting.
- Natural Resources/Co-Occurrences (Janet)
 - **Action:** Janet to create 5 maps for the 5 high value areas and update descriptions for each.
- Rare, Endangered and Invasive Species (Rob)
 - **Action:** Members to review the rare, endangered and invasive appendix and provide feedback prior to our next meeting.
- Climate Change (Gregg)
 - **Action:** Begin to review the current references and create an outline of content for our conservation plan. References:
 - 2021 NH UNH Climate Assessment
 - <https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1071&context=sustainability>
 - USDA Northeast Climate Hub - <https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/northeast/climate-impacts>
 - New Resource for Understanding How the Climate is Changing: USDA Releases Climate Quick Reference Guides - <https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/northeast/news/new-resource-understanding-how-climate-changing-usda-releases-climate-quick>
 - 2009 State Climate Action Plan (DES)
 - <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/r-ard-09-1.pdf>
- Next Steps
 - Create goals for each of the 5 HVA's
 - Determine which HVA's and goals will be addressed in 2024
 - Develop an outreach program for each goal to be addressed in 2024

- **Bylaws** – No changes

Forestry and Conservation

• Land Protection

- Intents to Cut
 - 23-001-20-T 211-05, Gove Road; 10 acres, cut 10; 14,000MBF, 50 tons chips, 120 cords; Simino
 - No wetland or other conservation concerns with this effort.
 - 23-001-21-T 247-04, Livermore Road: 100 acres, cut 90: 281,000MBF, 100 cords; Ayotte
 - In this discussion we reviewed the states and the town's role in these intents
 - State forester is responsible for ensuring that each cut is adhering to forestry standards and not impacting any wetlands. The state forester will visit each cut twice, once at the beginning and at the end. The forester will engage DES if needed.
 - Town Select Board reviews each intent to ensure the town roads are not damaged. And if they are damaged that the logger and landowner restore the road back to the pre-cut state. The town cannot disapprove a cut.
 - Town Conservation Commission reviews each intent to determine if there are any conservation concerns. If concerns arise the ConCom chair would contact the state forester and/or DES to voice the concern.
 - **Action:** Janet to review the GranitVIEW maps for wildlife priority areas, shoreland buffer and wetland areas.
- Building, excavation, and other permits - None
- South Acworth Forest (map 249, lot 9) – Concom needs to document goals and meet with forester
 - **Action:** Gregg and Mark to develop draft goals to be reviewed at our next meeting.
- Land Surveys - Crescent Lake (map 201, lots 107 and 108) – awaiting additional survey follow-on work
- Easement Monitoring – Review assignments
 - We reviewed Clark easement monitoring conducted by Scott; no issues identified. Gregg posted the documents in our team shared drive. **Action:** Scott to post results online.
- Update Prouty/Honey Brook Property - Map 250 lot 2 – we reviewed state attorney response
 - It was agreed that the responses we received from the state were adequate and we can move forward with the transaction. Select board already reviewed the effort and provided their approval. Town attorney drafted the deed. We have all the authorization that we need.
 - **Action:** Gregg/Kathi to provide the Select Board with an update.
 - **Action:** Gregg to discuss next steps with the state park representative.

• Water Protection (Crescent Lake, Cold River, watersheds, wetlands, ponds, and perennial streams)

- Shoreland Permit Issues
 - Awaiting DES final ruling on the Fong shoreland disruption.
- Crescent Lake Water Quality Group Update
 - Group is working on a plan that will include a watershed assessment of Crescent Lake in 2024. They are also working on an Outreach/Communication plan.
 - A 501(c)3 organization (CLEAR Trust) has been established to raise funds for water quality initiatives. The organization believes that it will start to receive funds by the end of this year or at the latest the 1st quarter of 2024. They are working on operating procedures for receipt and disbursement of funds.

Communications, Training and Outreach

• Training-Education

- Conservation Commission Webpage - <https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>

• Community Outreach

- Develop our Outreach Plan (Gregg)
 - We reviewed the process with a sample Outreach plan for example goals associated with Crescent Lake HVA.
 - This process will be followed once goals are defined for 2024.
- Volunteer Field Events – Crescent Lake Boundary Marking and Cleanup. Keyes Hollow Nature Trail
- Educational topics – Climate Change Impacts; Shoreland and wetland restrictions, limitations, and requirements.

- **Next Meeting** – 10 January 2024 at 7pm in the Town Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:20pm.

Conservation Commission Members:

- Jennifer Bland
- Gregg Thibodeau
- Kathi Bradt, Select Board Rep
- Mark Girard
- Scott Travers
- Janet Slocum
- Rob Traver
- Robin Ungeheuer (alt)

Contact information:

- Webpage <https://www.acworthnh.net/conservation-commission>
- E-mail acworthconservation@gmail.com
- Meeting 7:00 p.m. every 2nd Wednesday of month at the Town Hall
- Mail 13 Town Hall Rd., P.O. Box 37, Acworth, NH 03601, Attention: Conservation Commission
- Phone 603-835-6879