Orford Conservation Commission

Minutes of October 17, 2013 Meeting

Members Present: Harry Pease, Bry Beeson, Tom Bubolz, Carl Schmidt, Emily Bryant, Carl Cassel, Jeff MacQueen and Kathy Baker

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

The minutes of the September 19 meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Bry and a second by Carl Cassel.

Old Business:

Conservation Fund Spending History Update: Carl Cassel reported that he is still researching records and he will have a final report ready for the November meeting.

Water Testing Program Update: The e-coli counts at all five test sites in September were back down to normal levels. Harry sent the results to the Town Health Officer and Selectboard. He will follow-up to see if the Town intends to notify the public of the results.

Eck Woodlands Encroachment Update: The Selectboard was advised by Harry regarding findings on his last inspection as detailed in the September minutes. Upper Valley Land Trust recommended that the Selectboard send a letter to Larry Sargent. Harry will follow-up with the Selectboard.

Invasive Plants Demonstration Project Update: The project is to take place on the Orford Conservation Land.

1. Regarding access to the lower meadow of the Orford Conservation Land, Rendell Tullar reported to Harry that he gets access from the road down to the Perilman meadow by permission from Larry Taylor who farms that land. Rendell stated that he could access the lower meadow from the farm road down the bank on the Conservation Land with some repairs to the road. Rendell also reported that he will do some trimming of the edges of the fields with a brush hog this Fall.
2. Demonstration Project Proposal: Craig Putnam developed a proposal for the Commission’s consideration. The concept is to seek grant funding with assistance from Ron Rhodes. Kathy moved, and Carl Cassel seconded the motion to apply for grant funding as proposed by Craig. Discussion of the specifics of the project ensued. Jeff has discussed the project with some Rivendell teachers and they are interested in including students in this project. The Commission also wants to include funding for chemical treatment of some invasive plants, as may be required, in the grant application. Kathy moved and Carl Cassel seconded a motion to amend the project proposal submitted by Craig to include students in the project and chemical applications as necessary. The motion was unanimously approved. Harry will contact Craig and notify him of the amendment to the proposal and ask him to take the lead in working with Ron Rhodes on the application.

Weed Wrench Loan Program Update: Harry brought the Weed Wrench to the meeting and turned it over to Carl Cassel who will store it and loan it out. Harry will send Carl the Weed Wrench Loan Policy and Weed Wrench instructions and post a notice on the Orford Listserv concerning the Weed Wrench Loan Program.

Outreach Update: There has been no new communication from UVLT regarding the request from an owner of large acreage in town for assistance with a conservation easement request. Harry has attempted, unsuccessfully, to contact the Perilmans; phone calls have not been returned. Trinity Farm easements are still on hold.

New Business:

Annual Monitoring of Richardson and Schwaegler Easement Properties: Harry received a letter from The Society for The Protection of NH Forests regarding monitoring the easement properties. This is an annual requirement and is due by January 15, 2014. Emily volunteered to organize the monitoring visit and submit the report again this year.

Website Contents: Anne Duncan Cooley notified Harry that it is time to begin submitting information for the new town website. The Commission discussed the content list that Harry sent to the Town Administrator in June.

1. Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). Harry will check with the UVLSRPC for an electronic copy of the NRI that can be easily accessed.

2. Information regarding the management of easement lands. Emily will get the easement information. UVLT has much of this information.

3. Loan program for the Weed Wrench. Harry will handle this.

4. Birding hotspots. Jeff will provide a description and information.

5. Map of walking trails. Emily is working on it.

6. Boat landing information. Harry will contact Parks and Playgrounds Committee. Five years ago the Conservation Commission managed the property; the question is whether we still have that responsibility.

7. Information regarding invasive species. Harry will ask Craig to provide links and sources of invasive species information.

8. Recycling and hazardous waste disposal. Harry will contact Christine Bills about her recycling program and he will find out how the Piermont household hazardous waste disposal project went.

9. Water testing program. Tom will provide a write-up of the program and provide a spreadsheet of test results.

Jeff reported that Robb O’Donnell is ready to begin work on construction of the kiosk for the Orford Conservation Land. Jeff will weed whack an extended trail on the property.

Carl Schmidt stated that a second Orford representative is needed for the Upper Valley River Subcommittee of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions. The Subcommittee consists of two representatives from each of the five towns on the New Hampshire and Vermont sides of this segment of the river.

Carl Schmidt requested that the Conservation Commission contribute money to the Orford Historical Society to help with advertising costs for the December 10 program “The Connecticut: New England’s Great River,” that the Commission agreed to co-sponsor in September. Kathy moved, and Bry seconded a motion to contribute $50. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tom moved, and Kathy seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Baker