Orford Conservation Commission

Minutes of April 17, 2014 Meeting

Members Present: Harry Pease, Carl Schmidt, Craig Putnam, Tom Bubolz, Jeff MacQueen, Emily Bryant, Kathy Baker; Selectboard: Anne Duncan Cooley; Guest: Eric Parenti

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

Harry asked Alternate Commissioner Emily Bryant to fill in for the vacant Commissioner position for this meeting. Harry stated that in accordance with our bylaws, Alternates are to be designated to fill in for absent Commissioners at each meeting. Such Alternates will continue to serve for issues requiring a vote that are carried over to future meetings.

Harry stated that the minutes of the March meeting were amended to reflect that Bry Beeson had also been sworn in as an Alternate before the March meeting. Carl Cassel moved to approve the minutes, Tom Bubolz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Solarize Upper Valley Update: A notice was placed on the Orford listserv regarding Solarize and 20 responses were received. Vital Communities serves as the middleman between solar equipment providers and interested communities. If Orford is interested in participating, Vital Communities must be notified by the end of June. Anne reported that a Hanover sustainable energy group is considering applying in the fall. There was discussion about whether we can cooperate with Hanover in the application. Anne will contact the Hanover group and get back to us. Because the time of the members of the Orford Energy Committee is committed, Carl Cassel suggested we find other people in Orford to serve on the Energy Committee to pursue the Solarize project. It was agreed that we should sponsor a public meeting in Orford with Vital Communities. Carl Cassel and Emily agreed to plan the meeting. Carl Cassel stated that the meeting needs to be advertised. After some discussion, Kathy moved that we spend up to $200 to mail boxholders to Orford residents. Carl Cassel seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Household Hazardous Waste Update: Piermont and Orford are jointly holding a hazardous waste collection on May 17, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. in Piermont, sponsored by the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. Harry has put up posters around town and Sheri Clifford is to put it on listserv and the Orford website and send out a boxholder. Harry will serve as Orford’s monitor during the collection.

Galerucella Beetles Update: Harry stated that May 16 is the next deadline to apply for EQIP funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service for the Orford Conservation Land. He will talk with Nate Tullar and NRCS about the application. The 1,000 Galerucella beetles that we ordered will be shipped overnight and will arrive on June 17. They should be released within two hours of receipt. We will advertise the project with letters to abutters, notify the school, and get an article in the library newsletter and the listserv. Jeff offered to do the preliminary work to identify the locations of purple loosestrife for the release and ask Sarah Schwaegler to help. Emily will work on letters to the abutters.

New Business:

Election of Officers:

Chair: Kathy nominated Harry Pease, Carl Cassel seconded and he was elected unanimously.

Vice Chair: Emily nominated Carl Cassel, Carl Schmidt seconded and he was elected unanimously.

Secretary: Kathy nominated Fran Plaisted, Carl Cassel seconded and she was elected unanimously.

Other Business:

Craig Putnam was concerned about subdivisions requested by the Balch family at Bunten Farm. A discussion of conservation easements ensued. Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming public hearing on the subdivision requests.

Anne and Carl Cassel attended the “Saving Special Places” workshop in Laconia. Anne reported that climate change is affecting wildlife and that New Hampshire has the highest rate of Lyme disease in the country. Sea levels in Portsmouth are the highest they have been in twenty years.

Carl Cassel reported that current use penalty fees are transferred to the Conservation Fund quarterly. There have not been any transfers yet in 2014. It was agreed that we need to continue to monitor our balance of funds, record transactions in our monthly meeting minutes, and receive a report from the town treasurer monthly.

The Selectboard is establishing a long term capital investment advisory committee, with assistance from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission to analyze capital requirements for the Town of Orford. All Town Departments, Boards and Commissions are to be represented. The first meeting is May 12 at 7:00 at p.m. Carl Cassel volunteered to represent the Conservation Commission.

Carl Schmidt spoke regarding Ray Clark’s request for a subdivision on his Route 10 property that previously belonged to Al Plante. Mr. Clark has obtained permission from a property owner to access the proposed new lot via an existing right-of-way from Bridge Street. The subdivision has not been approved yet. He also mentioned Art Pease’s program scheduled for April 24 at the Historical Society annual meeting. His presentation will be “The Other Orford: Beyond the Bridge and the Ridge.”

Jeff stated Rivendell’s “Summer Visions” program in July will be focused on conservation. Jeff will stay in touch with Rivendell on this.

Tom moved and Kathy seconded a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Baker