Orford Conservation Commission

 Minutes of July 23, 2015 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Harry Pease, Carl Schmidt, Carl Cassel and Jeff MacQueen; Alternates Present: Fran Plaisted, Emily Bryant and Craig Putnam; Guests: John Roe and Jeanie McIntyre from Upper Valley Land Trust

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Harry requested that Fran Plaisted, Craig Putnam, and Emily Bryant serve as Commissioners tonight for the three vacant/open positions.

Fran made a motion that we accept the minutes of the June 18, 2015, meeting as amended by Carl Schmidt, Harry seconded the motion and all approved.

Old Business:

Planning for Mason Pond Project (Bischoff Property) Public Hearing and Fund Raising: As agreed at our June meeting, we will hold a Public Hearing on the project on August 20, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Niles Room at the Orford Town Offices. The purpose is to receive public input on the project and the Conservation Commission’s proposal to contribute $50,000 from the Conservation Fund and undertake a fund raising campaign to raise an additional $20,000 for the project. Planning discussion in preparation for the public hearing took place. Notice of the hearing is required to be issued at least 10 days prior to the hearing. Harry will prepare the notice to be published in the Journal Opinion and Valley News, posted at the Town Offices and sent out on the Orford listserv. Harry will do a presentation at the hearing about the project. Jean and John discussed strategies/approaches on fund raising campaigns. Carl Schmidt briefly summarized the fund raising campaign for the Town Hall Heritage Center. It was agreed that all Commissioners would work on fund raising and that we would hold a special fund raising meeting at 6:30 p.m. on August 11, 2015, in the Niles Room.

Conservation Fund and Budget: Records indicate that the last two Current Use Change Taxes collected by the Tax Collector have not been deposited into the Conservation Fund by the Treasurer. It may be a result of the change in Town Treasurer. Carl Cassel agreed to follow up and report back.

Kiosk at the Orford Conservation Land: Jeff explained that the estimate for the kiosk from Brad McCormick has increased slightly since reclaimed materials were not available. Carl Cassel made a motion that we approve an amount not to exceed $500 for the Kiosk, Jeff seconded the motion and it was approved. Jeff will follow up with Brad to ensure that it is built.

Invasive Plant Removal at Orford Conservation Land: Jeff reported that Mike Bald is working on removing invasive plants on the Orford Conservation Land and should be done soon. Harry will contact NRCS to be sure the work is meeting their guidelines. Jeff noted that when he was on site with Mike Bald there was very little Purple Loosestrife, indicating that the beetles we released in June 2014 to eat the plants are likely doing their job.

New Business:

Carl Schmidt reported that the Emerald Ash Borer is getting closer to us.

Harry reported that we need to submit our 2016 budget by August 19.

Carl Cassel made a motion to adjourn, Carl Schmidt seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Plaisted