Orford Conservation Commission

 Minutes of October 15, 2015 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Harry Pease, Carl Schmidt, Carl Cassel, and Jeff MacQueen; Alternates Present: Fran Plaisted, Emily Bryant and Craig Putnam; Selectboard Representative: Anne Duncan Cooley

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

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

Minutes from the September 17 meeting were reviewed. Carl Cassel motioned we accept them, Carl Schmidt seconded and the motion carried.

Minutes from the September 23 meeting were reviewed. Emily motioned we accept them, Carl Schmidt seconded and the motion carried.

Minutes from the October 1 LCHIP site visit were reviewed. Carl Schmidt motioned we accept them, Craig seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business:

Update on Mason Pond Project Fund Raising, LCHIP Site Visit and October 11 Walking Tour: Fran agreed to check the post office box weekly that was set up for fund raising and mail the donations to UVLT for deposit into our project bank account. We discussed sending thank you notes from the Commission to all donors. It was recommended that we develop a simple one page mailer to send out. Carl Schmidt will provide a copy of the thank you note developed by the Historical Society for contributions to the Town Hall Heritage Center. Harry will check with UVLT about what they do for other fund raising campaigns. We have had several people request another opportunity to visit the project since they were not able to on October 11 during the Walking Tour. It was agreed that we would do it on Saturday, October 24. We will meet at the Town Hall Heritage Center at 2:00 p.m. and car pool up to the property. Harry will coordinate with David Bischoff and put a notice out on list serv. Commissioners should notify anyone they think might be interested in going. Harry reported that the LCHIP site visit on October 1 went well. Having the Commissioners, land owner, UVLT Vice President and Selectboard member present gave a good impression of the interest and support for this project. The LCHIP Executive Director said that grant applicants will be notified by phone on December 3 and 4, 2015 of the LCHIP Board’s funding decisions. There were a lot of visitors to the property during the annual Fall Walking Tour on October 11. The weather was perfect and provided for spectacular views. We received lots of positive feedback from participants. It was suggested that we obtain more fund raising packages for Commissioners, the libraries and the Town Hall Heritage Center. Harry will contact UVLT to obtain more.

Conservation Fund and Budget: Harry briefed the Selectboard and Budget Advisory Committee on our 2016 budget request on September 30. The budget has been level funded at $1,970 for three years. We have approximately $206,000 in the Conservation Fund.

Approval of Accounts Payable: Fran incurred an expense of $25 to open the PO Box for fund raising that the Commission authorized in August. She will also incur mailing expenses for sending donations to UVLT for deposit. Carl Cassel motioned that we authorize reimbursement to Fran not to exceed $50 for rental of the PO Box and postage, with receipts to be provided. Jeff seconded and the motion carried. The Orford Historical Society requested reimbursement for one half of the expenses of promoting the Fall Walking Tour “Exploring Quinttown’s Secrets” which the Commission co-sponsored. Total expenses were $314.45. Fran motioned that we authorize payment of $157.20 from our budget to reimburse the Historical Society for half of the expenses for the Walking Tour, Carl Cassel seconded and the motion carried.

New Business:

NH Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) Annual Meeting: This year’s meeting is November 7 at Pembroke Academy. Harry encouraged Commissioners to attend. Registration fees will be reimbursed from our education budget.

Commissioner Contact Information for NHACC: NHACC has requested names, addresses and emails for all Commissioners and Alternates. All provided the information for Harry to submit to NHACC.

Annual Monitoring of Richardson Conservation Easement: We received a request from The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to perform the annual monitoring of the Richardson conservation easement. Jeff will take the lead.

Bruce Schwaegler received a sign from the Lakes Association to put up at the Indian Pond Boat Landing which he turned over to the Conservation Commission. The sign advises boaters to inspect and clean their boats to help prevent the spread of invasive plants and fish. Anne will discuss this with appropriate people and have the sign installed. Fran suggested that we should check into having signs at Upper and Lower Baker Ponds as well.

Carl Schmidt reported that Marcus White is writing a history of Indian Pond.

Carl Schmidt suggested that it would be very valuable if the “Journal Opinion” would publish a descriptive article, with photographs, about the Mason Pond project, especially in light of its importance for Orford. Harry Pease agreed to talk with Cicely Richardson about doing such an article.

Jeff reported that he put water seal on the new kiosk at the Orford Conservation Land and that Andy Boyce is making a map for the kiosk. He also reported that the trees we planted last spring for the riparian buffer are doing well.

Carl Cassel motioned that we adjourn, Jeff seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Plaisted