Orford Conservation Commission

Approved Minutes of Meeting on February 15,.2018

Present: Commissioners – Ted Cooley (Chair), Carl Schmidt, Tom Bubolz, Craig Putnam, Emily Bryant, Harry Pease, and Fran Plaisted (Secretary) \Paul Goundry attended as representative of the Selecboard.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01.

Tom B. motioned we accept the minutes as modified. Harry seconded. Motion carried.

Appointments- Harry had a list of appointments and he forwarded to Ted and we are in the process of determining who’s needs a new appointment. We discussed a process for streamlining the appointment process so that everyone can be appointed and have the term be due at a specific time of the year like March.. We will need to check our RSA’s to see if we can set this up so that all individual’s term end in March. We have always had elections in April and we will continue to have them in April. Goal to have appointments done before elections.

We reviewed the petition article regarding the change tax funds. Text of petition states: To see if the town will vote to direct the Orford Selectboard and the Conservation Commission under the provisions of RSA 79-A:25-a (land use change tax fund) to adjust the allocation of the Land Use Change Tax Fund from 100% to the Conservations Commission to a division of 80/20. The 80% will be dedicated to the Bridges and Roads Capitol Reserve Fund established in 1989, overseen by the Board of Selectman with 20% to the Conservation Commission.

History of theConservation Fund was established in 2000 at the Town Meeting.

2009- Attempt to change failed in town.

Once the funds are in the conservation fund, only the conservation commission can decide what to spend money on as outlined in State Laws.

Amount of money that has come into the Commission in the past two years is $6000 from land use change tax There is currently approximately $146,000 in the fund.

Carl S. has motioned that the Conservation Commission does not support the petitioned Warrant Article to change the Land Use Change Tax allocation because it is critically important that the town have a viable Conservation Fund to continue to achieve and encourage land conservation in Orford. Therefore we recommend that there be no change. Fran seconded. Motion carried. All voted in favor.

Explain what the Land Use Change Tax.

Ted could give an explanation of why, and here are some of the facts.

Taxes on residences does not cover the costs of the needs but taxes on open land more than covers the cost required by the land.

Open space is a sponge helping to limit the impact from flooding.

Conservation funds can be used to leverage with other organizations. It took us 10 years to collect the funds to have enough funds to leverage the money to purchase Mountain View Farm (costs us $60,000 and as a result of this fund we preserved to a $300,000 property that has both historical and conservation impact on the town of Orford.)

Agreed to meet on 3/1/18 at 7pm.

Motion: Harry motioned we adjourn, Tom seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Plaisted