

Orford Conservation Commission (OCC)
Meeting Minutes: June 18, 2020
Meeting held via Zoom due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements

Present via Zoom: Commissioners: Ted Cooley (Chair), Carl Schmidt, Tom Bubolz, John Miller (Vice Chair), Craig Putnam, and Harry Pease. Alternates: Emily Bryant, Fran Plaisted (Secretary), and Carl Cassell

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Carl, and Fran were seated for the meeting.

1. **Minutes of April 23, 2020:** John moved we approve minutes. Fran Plaisted seconded. Motion Carried.
 2. **Minutes of May 21, 2020: John** moved we approve the minutes. Fran seconded. Motion carried.
 3. **Water Testing:** Supplies were missing so we missed June testing. Supplies obtained and we are all set to start testing in July.
 4. **Orfordville Culvert Project-**wetland applications forwarded to all parties. \$400 wetland applications fee to NH DES paid by OCC. Cost exceeded project estimate by \$1500. OCC is splitting overage with Horizons Engineering. Bry Beeson will need to sign off as an abutter. He wants clarification regarding where equipment would be staged etc. Horizons indicated minimal impact. We noted: permit application does not require abutter approval but approval is required before permit is issued.
 5. **NRI Subcommittee-** John will send out two chapters at a time for review. If there are not edits or objections, the chapters will be presumed ready for publication under NRI 2020 update. Two chapters will be shared every two weeks. Emily will notify John if there is a map for a given chapter or section. Draft copies will have photos. We can do an appendix with extra photos.
 6. **Invasive Plants (Japanese knotweed):** Craig and Emily provided update. The “smothering method” recommended by NH Dept of Ag requires a heavy plastic sheeting layer along with wood mulch. They were able to get plastic tarp (recycled) from Fairlee Marine at no cost and wood mulch from Highway Department, also at no cost. The group cut and pulled up the knotweed. Filled about 50 bags of knotweed plants. Left them behind town office to dry out and die. They are experimenting with hardware cloth covering in a small area of the “smothering section”. They noted that there are some shoots coming up through the hardware cloth which will girdle the shoots. We should do this again in a more visible spot. John will update Sarah Schwaegler since she brought this issue to the OCC. Work on patch of the weed at 25A will be more visible. Trying to document steps and results. The subcommittee goes out every two weeks to check the area. Will try to get more volunteers to help out. Ruth Hook contacted OCC due to invasives along Dame Hill Road (an NH DOT maintenance area)..
 7. **Land Use Agreements (for Orford Conservation land and Boat Launch land).** Ted added Emily’s tax map to the agreement and some background information. The OCC wants to add text about late haying to protect bobolinks. Possible text: mow no later than
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early May than not for 65 days. (Source??) Jeff MacQueen was going to contact the Tullars about mowing later. Ted will follow up with Jeff for status. Agree that the agreement allows time for the Bobolinks fledge. Emily will find the source for this and then add text. John will research whether there is compensation for farmers who delay mowing. NRSC has a program for delayed mowing. Ted will review the language with the town attorney. Sign a one year lease giving the current text and then add bobolink text for next agreement. Ted moved that we use the language we have for one year, review with attorney and secure Tullar's signatures. John seconded. Motion carried.

8. Diane Gildersleeve and Jeff MacQueen have stepped down from OCC since they each relocated. The OCC will seek replacements.
9. **Invoices:** Alan Dyke -\$80- Ted moved we approve the invoice. Craig seconded. Motion carried. \$400 application for the permit to DES. Horizon Engineering will invoice us for \$750 last bill. Ted moved we spend up to \$750, Craig seconded. Motion carried. Invoice will be paid upon receipt.
10. **Other Business:** Trail Finder- Indian Pond Heritage Trail is on Trail Finder. Paul Goundrey is leading the effort to maintain the trail. Several volunteers helped with trail work. Paul is going to mark the trail and we will take some photos. Emily Bryant is working on trail maps with Claire Polfus, Center for Community GIS. Need to coordinate w/ who is the manager etc. If we are going to add the Daniel Doan Trail, will need to gather GPS data again. Claire P. will coordinate with Upper Valley Trails Alliance to discuss landowner permission and what other trails we can be added to Trail Finder.
11. **Membership terms and recruitment.** We are looking to recruit new commissioners and alternates. We reviewed names and status. Craig and Ted reached out. Recruitment will continue
12. **Flood Mitigation Maintenance:** What if any maintenance is required at the Brook Road junction w/ 25A. We have to be careful mowing to avoid planting, and seek information on how to maintain this area. How do we work with NH DOT and whom do you talk to intervene with their maintenance crews? Need to contact Terry Straight to coordinate mowing and not spread the knotweed.
13. **Websites and virtual events:** Will update Orford OCC website and Facebook page. John can send some photos from the Knotweed work.
14. **Emerald Ash Borer-** Carl Schmidt commented that he had no further information. John Miller found an article and posted it on the Facebook page. Good options for OCC website. 6/10 article in JO and he provided update from the article.

Next meetings: (likely via Zoom): July 16, 7pm and August 20, 2020 at 7pm.

Motion (Tom/John): to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm

Minutes taken by Fran Plaisted