Orford Conservation Commission

 Minutes of June 18, 2015 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Harry Pease, Tom Bubolz, Carl Schmidt, Carl Cassel and Jeff MacQueen; Alternates Present: Fran Plaisted and Emily Bryant; Selectboard Representative: Anne Duncan Cooley; Guest: John Roe, Upper Valley Land Trust

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Harry requested that Fran Plaisted and Emily Bryant serve as Commissioners tonight for two vacant positions.

Old Business:

Bischoff Property Acquisition (Mason Pond Project): Carl Cassel moved that we have a non-public discussion of the Mason Pond Project, Emily seconded and all approved. At the end of the discussion Emily moved that we end the non-public session, Carl Schmidt seconded and all approved.

We discussed making a contribution to the Mason Pond Project from the Orford Conservation Fund and also undertaking a private fundraising campaign. Following the discussion, Harry moved that the Orford Conservation Commission utilize $50,000 from the Orford Conservation Fund and conduct a private fundraising campaign to raise $20,000 to put toward the Mason Pond Project. Carl Cassel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. We then discussed holding a Public Hearing regarding our proposed contribution to the project. Following the discussion Fran moved that we have a Public Hearing at the beginning of our August 20, 2015 meeting to discuss our proposal to use $50,000 from the Orford Conservation Fund for the Mason Pond Project. Carl Cassel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Due to some Commissioner’s schedules, we agreed to hold our next Conservation Commission meeting on July 23 at 7:00 pm, one week later than usual. UVLT will attend to assist us in preparing for the Public Hearing.

Minutes of May 21, 2015 Meeting: Emily moved that we accept the minutes with Carl Schmidt’s additional comments. Carl Cassel seconded and the motion carried.

Conservation Fund and Budget: The only expense thus far this year is $40 for mowing the area around the monument at the Orford Conservation Land in May. The balance in the Conservation Fund as of the end of May was $203,615.

Potential New Commissioners: Two of our seven Commissioner positions are vacant. We discussed our efforts to find new candidates. Commissioners will continue to contact town residents and report at our next meeting.

New Business:

Kiosk at the Orford Conservation Land: Brad McCormick is agreeable to build a kiosk for $375. Jeff moved that we hire Brad McCormick to build the kiosk for $375 to be paid for from the Orford Conservation Fund, Carl Cassel seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Jeff will contact Brad to have him build the Kiosk. Ann Green suggested marking a trail from the monument down to the river. We intend to have a trail map at the kiosk and Jeff said he would put up signs to guide people.

Orford Boat Landing Property: Nate Tullar contacted Harry regarding the Orford Boat Landing Property that they farm under a licensing agreement with the Conservation Commission. Tullando Farm is entering into a contract with NRCS to improve the soil health by injecting the soil with manure and aerial seeding. Harry motioned that we amend the current agreement to extend the current expiration date of May 1. 2016 to June 20, 2020 in order to give Tullando Farm the control of land time they need for the NRCS contract. Carl Cassel seconded the motion and it was approved. Harry suggested that he invite Nate Tullar to future meeting to tell us about their land management practices at the Boat Landing and Orford Conservation Land and all agreed.

Emily reported that there will be a Solar Open House at Mark Blanchard’s house on June 28.

Jeff reported that Mike Bald is working on removing invasive plants on the Orford Conservation Land. He noted that Yellow Flag Iris is another bad invasive there.

Anne reported that Tom Thomson‘s lupine drive in Quinttown will June 19.

Harry will talk to the Road Agent about a resident’s concern about the prevalence of Japanese Knotweed along the Archertown and Blackberry Hill Roads.

Carl Schmidt informed us that the Orford Historical Society will hold its fall walking tour in Quinttown in early October. He proposed that it be a jointly sponsored event with the Orford Conservation Commission. There could be a focus on the “Billy Brown Farm” which would be a good way to introduce the public to our Mason Pond Project. A possible title is “Exploring Quinttown’s Secrets,” and the tentative date is Sunday, October 11 with a rain date of October 18. Emily moved that we co-sponsor “Exploring Quinttown’s Secrets” with the Orford Historical Society, Harry seconded and the motion was approved.

Tom moved and Carl Cassel seconded a motion to adjourn which was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Plaisted