Orford Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting on February 18, 2016

Commissioners Present: Harry Pease, Craig Putnam, Carl Cassel, Tom Bubolz, Carl Schmidt and Jeff MacQueen; Alternates Present: Emily Bryant and Fran Plaisted

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. following the adjournment of the Mason Pond Public Hearing.

Harry asked Fran to serve as Commissioner for the vacant position.

Approve the Minutes of the January 21, 2016 Meeting: Emily recommended that we modify some language in the minutes regarding the proposed additional contribution of $10,000 to the Mason Pond Project from the Orford Conservation Fund. Carl moved we approve the minutes as amended, Tom seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mason Pond Project Update: Craig moved that we authorize an additional $10,000 disbursement from the Conservation Fund for the Mason Pond Project. Carl Cassel seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Harry provided an update on the status of the Mason Pond Project. The due diligence package is due to LCHIP 30 days prior to their disbursement of grant funds for the closing. The package will include the appraisal, survey, deed language, management plan and final budget. The goal is to close on/about April 15, 2016.

There will be two deeds at closing. The first is the fee acquisition of the property by the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) from current owners David and John Bischoff. The second is a conveyance deed from UVLT conveying primary and secondary executory interests in the property to the Town of Orford acting through the Conservation Commission and to LCHIP, respectively. The conveyance deed will also include covenants and restrictions applicable to the property.

We discussed how to celebrate the success of the Project and thank the Project supporters. Ideas include holding a ribbon cutting or similar celebration at the property, posting a list of Project contributors on a kiosk at the site, and/or inviting Project donors to a special event or meeting. This will be discussed further with UVLT and at our next meeting.

Invasive Plant Control at the Orford Conservation Land: Harry has been coordinating with Ron Rhodes of the Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC) and Ross Stevens of the North Woods Center. CRWC will have a crew of 4 or 5 men from North Woods helping to plant additional trees in the riparian buffer in the spring and they will also begin removing invasive plants. North Woods is also scheduling a crew to return in the summer to finish the invasive plant removal. Tullando Farm and Conservation Commission volunteers will assist. We will only use non-chemical treatment methods. We recently learned about a control method of placing small black plastic bags over stumps of cut invasive plants to prevent re-sprouting that was developed by a young NH farmer. Harry will check into it. We also discussed plans for the kiosk for the spring, including putting up a map of the property and posting a list of birds and plants at the site.

March 8, 2016 Town Meeting: In addition to the Photo Contest, we will have our Mason Pond Project display. Carl Cassel will thank Orford for its support for the Mason Pond Project during the Other Business session at the end of the meeting.

Tom Bubolz moved to adjourn, Carl Cassel seconded and the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Fran Plaisted