

Orford Conservation Commission (OCC) Meeting Minutes: 21st November 2019

Present: Board members: Ted Cooley (Chair), John Miller, Harry Pease, Carl Schmidt, Emily Bryant (Alternate).

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. Emily was seated for the meeting.

1. Minutes: 9/19/19 Minutes: Harry moved to approve. John seconded. Motion carried. 10/17/19 Minutes: Harry moved to accept. John seconded. Motion carried. 10/24/19 Minutes: Harry moved to accept. Carl S. seconded. Motion carried.
2. 2020 Budget: The Selectboard has reviewed the OCC budget request and has increased the water testing line item by \$250 to accommodate additional testing sites in 2020.
3. Review of Land Use Agreements: No updates from the Town Attorney for agreements regarding the Boat Landing parcel or Orford Conservation Land (aka Richmond Property). Ted will follow up with the attorney. Harry noted that we need to confirm agreement language, term of agreement (currently 5 years), and whether to offer agreement to others. Carl S asked whether we needed to check with current licensees (at present Tullando Farm) and consensus is yes. Sense of Commissioners present was that 5 year term is OK, and that land maintenance continue to be required in lieu of rent.
4. Indian Pond Access Road Culvert: No update to report. Waiting for news from Highway Department regarding whether the culvert can be removed or must it be replaced. Ted to contact John Berryman. John also raised an issue with dam condition and inspection status, and whether there is any further action required regarding fill at Indian Pond Beach.
5. Jacobs Brook Project: Bushes planted with Connecticut River Conservancy. Thanks to Commissioners and others who helped with planting.
6. Culvert Inventory: Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) has completed their study. Meghan Butts from the RPC is planning a meeting in December to discuss the study. Data still needs NH Dept. of Environmental Services (DES) approval. Data likely available beginning of 2020. Data will be entered into Highway Department database by John Berryman to track culvert condition and replacement.
7. Invasives: The Commissioners thanked John M. for his gathering of information on invasive plants, both foreign and domestic.
8. Conservation Fund: John M. quoted NH RSA 36A regarding the Conservation Fund (CF), citing purpose of the Commission (A2), power (A4), and the Fund. The differences between Town appropriations and CF usages and approvals were discussed. No action taken.

9. Possible Project: John M. suggested possible project: Foreign Invasives Inventory and Control (under NH Dept. of Agriculture). John M. used NH Dept. of Ag. tool to map knotweed along Jacobs Brook. Rough estimate from Redstart approximately \$6k for first year to treat Japanese knotweed along Jacobs Brook. John Berryman has noted that the Highway Department (OHD) is willing to help and has dumped woodchips near Tillotson Falls Road triangle where knotweed was identified by Sarah Schwaegler. The “sandwich” technique of wood chips, weed control layer, wood chips was discussed. Carl S. noted that training and information should be broadly shared with the public. The Commissions agreed that Jacobs Brook was a good starting point.
10. Motion (John M.) as amended (TedC): The Commission supports in principle utilization of Conservation Fund monies not to exceed \$6k for fees and expenses incurred for inventory and control of foreign invasives. (John M. moved, Harry seconded). Motion carried.
11. Other Potential Projects: John M. proposed:
 - a. Study of bog on Orfordville Road
 - b. Natural Resource InventoryProposed projects were tabled.
12. Bird Count: Orford is on the list for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC). We will get the word out about times and locations.
13. Snowshoe Event: Emily presented a proposal from the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) to hold a Full Moon Snowshoe event 10th January at Mountain View Farm. The OCC concurs this is a good program and offers to help. Emily will contact Alison Marchione at UVLT to coordinate.
14. OCC Membership: Looking for candidates for Commissioners and Alternates.
15. Indian Pond Heritage Trail: Paul Goundrey reported to Ted C. that Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) viewed the trail and suggested they may have funding sources for trail maintenance.
16. Commissioner Updates:
 - a. Carl S. reported that the Farm Building Stabilization Project with the UVLT at Mountain View Farm is on hold. Funds are raised but UVLT contact is leaving. Project status currently unknown.
 - b. John M. reported that OHD has done beaver remediation. We should work with OHD to get notice before such action.
17. Motion to Adjourn: John M. moved, Harry seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Bryant, E.S. Cooley