

Orford Conservation Commission (OCC)
Meeting Minutes: January 16, 2020

Present: Ted Cooley (Chair), Emily Bryant, Craig Putnam, Carl Cassell, John Miller, Tom Bubolz, Carl Schmidt

Meeting was called to order at 7:02.

1. **Minutes:** Approval of minutes from 19th December 2020 meeting tabled.
2. **Culvert Inventory Report Presentation:** Meghan Butts from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (RPC) will present study results Tuesday, 21st January, at 7:00 p.m. in the Niles Room. Snow date is the 28th.
3. **Water Testing.** Tom Bubolz will confer with Jeff MacQueen and Harry Pease schedule water testing at designated Orford locations. The testing dates will need to be confirmed at the March meeting of the Conservation Commission. Tom explained that Eastern Analytical, Inc. will supply kits on request and has requested kits.
4. **Land Use Agreements:** Ted will follow up with the Town's Attorney on any recommended tweaks.
5. **Knotweed Invasive Control Project for Town of Orford:** John Miller presented "*Cost Proposal – Knotweed Control for Town of Orford*", received from Redstart Natural Resource Management of Bradford, Vermont. The document describes a proposed Knotweed control project be carried out at various locations throughout town. The proposed budget, which includes permitting, training for volunteers, and "foliar spraying" and cutting of Knotweed at three designated sites, totals \$6,145. This cost can be reduced if the Orford Conservation Commission can organize volunteers to perform some work. Redstart also proposed three "add on" sites at an additional cost of \$3,800. No work can be performed without prior consent from landowners.

During discussion of the proposal, Craig Putnam expressed specific concern regarding proposed use of an herbicide containing *glyphosate*. He also commented that this project could entail a very big OCC commitment for an unknown number of future years. Carl Cassell proposed that the OCC convene a public meeting to explain the invasive problem and discuss the proposal to combat it. Emily Bryant noted that public support for the project it would be essential, and proposed that the OCC make clear it is "considering" undertaking the project. Cassell suggested a public meeting date of April

21, plus a “snow date”. John Miller noted that Redstart has proposed a schedule for cutting of the invasive in mid-June, ahead of the primary July – August growing season. Leadtime is required for Redstart to obtain the necessary permits for the work. John undertook to find out the required lead time. John has contacted Doug Cygan, the Invasives Service Coordinator at the N.H. Department of Agriculture, about this proposal. Carl Schmidt expressed appreciation for John Miller’s work on this project, which was in effect instigated by Sarah Schwaegler’s dramatic presentation at an earlier OCC meeting.

6. **Orfordville Road/Clough Brook Culvert Project:** Ted reported that this issue is on the Selectboard’s agenda for its February 8th meeting. He and John Miller will attend. The objective is to determine whether the Selectboard will be willing to proceed with the project that has a projected to cost the Town of Orford under \$10,000. The OCC has offered up to \$10,000 from the Conservation Fund to pay for the required engineering study, but is unwilling to commit the funds if the design will not be implemented.
7. **Natural Resources Inventory Subcommittee Report.** John Miller urged OCC members to review and comment on the draft sections of the Inventory that have already been written. He stressed our objective to make the Inventory accessible to the general public, and noted that we can do our own formatting of the text and additional content. The OCC discussed whether the final document should online only or also appear in print form. The consensus was to provide the document online with a few printed copies (1 or 2 each) to the libraries and the Town.
8. **Interest in Promoting Pollinators:** John Miller reported that he had talked with Bry Beeson about Bry’s interest in promoting pollinator plantings in Orford. Bry would be interested in consulting “one-on-one” with interested individuals. Ted reiterated his goal of creating a pollinator garden at the Town Offices Building.

8. Other Business:

Invoices: Ted moved that the Commission approve payment of an invoice for \$306 from Eastern Analytical for water testing. Motion carried.

Orford Town Meeting (March 10): Ted requested a display table for the OCC, and asked Commissioners to provide photos for a slide show.

Commissioners' Terms: Ted noted that the following Commissioners' and Alternates' terms expire 31st March and will expire at the end of March and would be "up for renewal": Jeff MacQueen, John Miller, Carl Cassell, and Emily Bryant. Members who do not wish to be reappointed should notify him ASAP.

Tom Bubolz made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Schmidt