

Orford Conservation Commission (OCC)
Meeting Minutes: February 20, 2020

Present: Members: Ted Cooley (Chair), Carl Schmidt, Tom Bubolz, Jeff Macqueen, John Miller, Craig Putnam, John Miller; Alternates: Carl Cassel, Emily Bryant.

Meeting was called to order at 7:02pm

1. **Minutes** from December 2019 and January 2020 were tabled until the next meeting.
2. **Invasives presentation:** on March 19 in the Multipurpose Room of Rivendell Academy, Doug Cygan of NH DES will give a presentation on invasive plants, in particular Japanese Knotweed. >>> Ted will determine an alternate time for the March OCC meeting, since March 19 is the usual date.
3. **Reports:**
 - *Culverts Report* presentation (held Jan 21). Meghan Butts and Olivia Uyizeye of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC presented the information. A copy of the digital data and a map were given to the town. Ted uploaded the data to the OCC Google drive. It's not clear whether or who will incorporate this into the town's highway records, since John Berryman's position was temporary and he is out of town for the winter.
 - *Water testing:* Harry has set up with Eastern Analytics for water testing on 6/2, 7/7, 8/4, and 9/1 at 10 sites, and requested 10 extra testing kits in case they are needed. Harry would like to have someone else learn how to do the testing in case he can't do it (since Jeff is stepping down from the commission). Jeff wondered whether a student would like to be involved.
 - *Japanese Knotweed* removal by Redstart Forestry / Invasives presentation. John was able to determine landowners for the knotweed locations specified in Redstart Forestry's proposal for knotweed control. After some discussion, it was decided that we will reach out to these landowners before the March 19 invasives presentation and encourage them to attend, with the idea that we all will learn from the presentation. John noted that this proposal covers the initial treatment; effective control requires 5 years of follow-up work – who does that? Landowners? Town? Redstart? Combination? In any case, nothing can be done on any of this without landowner permission. A representative from Redstart Forestry will attend the meeting. Jeff saw a presentation on knotweed control in Norwich – they had mixed results. >>> Members of the commission volunteered to contact landowners and other interested parties. >>> John will develop some talking points to use when contacting landowners.
4. **Orfordville Road culvert project.** Ted and John went to a Selectboard meeting. The Selectboard agreed to have the Town do the work on the culvert (in 2021) if the OCC pays for the engineering design and permit. (On 12/19/19, the OCC voted to pay up to \$10K for the design and permit if the town would do the work). The design needs to be ready in time for the dry season when the work can be done.

5. **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) subcommittee.** Ted suggested that the subcommittee talk about what style/ formatting they want for the report, and whether we want to get help with this (e.g from UVLSRPC).
6. **Preparation for OCC display at Town Meeting (3/10):** Ted asked members to send him any photos for the display. >>> Jeff will bring the OCC laminated banner, and has a trifold display on the Brackett Brook Farm project. It was suggested that we publicize the March 19 invasives presentation at town meeting. There are some pamphlets on invasives we could hand out.
7. **Land use agreements:** no update. Needs to be done soon since farmers will need to plant soon.
8. **Invoices:** none.
9. **Terms of commissioners:** Jeff MacQueen is stepping down since he is moving. Members thanked him heartily for his years of service on the commission. The terms for John (regular member), Carl C (alternate) and Emily (alternate) are up this year. Carl C and Emily volunteered to continue on for another 3-year term as alternates. Ted noted that all officers of the commission (Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary) are up for election every year in April.
10. **Events and outreach:** Town Meeting (3/10), Invasives presentation (3/19). Next OCC meeting to be determined. Ted encouraged members to think about other possibilities for events.
11. **Brackett Brook Farm celebration:** Harry said that the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) is planning to have a celebration of the conservation of Brackett Brook Farm this spring, possibly in April.
12. **Orford Conservation Land:** UVLT sent Ted the monitoring report for this parcel.
13. **Since Jeff is stepping down,** he will have to pass the torch on some duties, in particular:
 - Monitoring the Richardson conservation land.
 - Housing the Weed Wrench.
 - Weed whacking at the Orford Conservation property -If no one takes this on, should we stop having Allan Dyke mow the path that goes from the parking area to the road down to the lower field? Sense of the meeting was that we should keep doing the weed whacking to maintain the trail that Jeff developed.
14. Harry mentioned that on **March 5, UVLT is having a “Conservation Commission Gathering”** 6:00 – 8:30pm. This is a good opportunity to meet with people from other conservation commissions. Emily will be giving a presentation about Lidar at the gathering.
15. Carl S mentioned that **on 2/29** the Historical Society has a panel presentation about **growing up on a farm in Orford in the 1950’s and ‘60’s.**
16. Motion: (Tom/all) to adjourn. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Bryant