

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
March 11, 2009**

A meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:40 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Present were: Paul Pinkham, David Weathers, Rob Adair, Connie Briggs, Dan Lucy, Carol Lyman, and Linda Kearney.

The Chair appointed Ms. Kearney as a full voting member.

1. Approval of Minutes: 1/14/09 and 2/11/09 – Motion by Ms. Kearney, second by Mr. Briggs, that the Minutes of the January 14th meeting be accepted as written. Carried by unanimous vote.

There was no quorum for the Feb. 11th meeting thus no meeting was held and report to that effect was accepted.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Reports:

a. Don Johnson - Mr. Pinkham reported on behalf of Mr. Johnson who could not be present. The timber harvest has been completed and the first check of \$5,000+ received. Mr. Johnson expects the total to reach \$7,000 as predicted – some of the work was done at less than the normal going rate. It was reported the site looks good and Mr. Johnson is pleased with the work.

Mr. Johnson, making reference to the January meeting Minutes, noted a \$1500 reduction in the operating budget had been discussed. He is agreeable and will bring a recommendation to the next meeting.

b. Jeff Lougee – Mr. Lougee could not be present. No report provided.

c. Treasurer's Report – Conservation Savings: \$17,918, beginning with \$17,488 in Jan. 2008. Hubbard-Davis Account – Jan. 2008 - \$14,914; Dec. 2008 - \$15,223. Conservation Land – Jan. 2008 - \$116,986; Dec. \$104,237. \$15,000 expended in May 2008 to USVLT for Hussey Project/Strategic Conservation Planning Project funding.

d. Strategic Planning – Funding for the USVLT Strategic Conservation Planning Project will come from the Conservation Land Acquisition account, not the penalty fund.

Mr. Pinkham said we need to keep in mind that should the land that the State has acquired for the bypass adjacent to Pudding Pond and the purchase from Schiavi become available, it would be wise for us to go after those using monies from the penalty fund.

It was Mr. Weathers' opinion that it will be years from now before the northern section of the bypass will be addressed. Mr. Briggs said the town has accepted a large sum of money for the northern bypass, if it gets scratched we have to be able to buy it back. Mr. Weathers feels it will be 15 to 20 years into the future before the State will make a decision on that land (near where Sticks and Stones Trail is located). Mr. Adair said if the piece south of Pudding Pond and the Schiavi piece become available, the seller has first refusal. Mr. Briggs stated we should make sure we have the fund available in that event. Mr. Adair questioned where the money went which we accepted for the Pudding Pond piece. Mr. Weathers stated it went to reduce the debt load for that year.

Motion was made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Ms. Kearney, to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted. Carried by unanimous vote.

d. Selectmen's Report – Mr. Weathers reported the Selectmen are requesting that someone provide an update on the Strategic Conservation Plan as regards the \$10,000. Mr. Sires has said the Commission does not have to have the Selectmen's approval. Mr. Briggs noted USVLT is applying for 4 or 5 other grants to fund the Strategic Plan. It will require an inventory, establish value for a number of different criteria – natural resources, etc. They are looking at large parcels, likely places. USVLT has put together their approach to developing a plan, have hired a professional to go out and find the information. Mr. Pinkham pointed out the Commission can proceed without any further approval.

e. Member Roundtable – Mr. Pinkham noted there was once an assignment system in place whereby different Commission members were assigned to different properties to report on; some properties have not been visited in a long time and we need to get out there and take a look at some of them and make some evaluations.

4. Other Business:

a. 2009 Budget – Have to refine the Forest and Wetlands Management Plan with Don Johnson.

b. USVLT Proposal – None.

c. Whitaker Trail Plan/Work Progress – Mr. Adair advised we need to wait until the snow is gone.

d. Whitaker Management Plan – Mr. Pinkham noted as good a document as it is, we need a two page summary. Mr. Adair offered a copy to anyone interested, noting it is a good piece of work outlining all the work we think we need to be doing in the next ten years.

e. Trail Signs/Information Boards – Ms. Lyman said Mr. Lougee thought twelve signs would be sufficient for the existing areas outside of Whitaker. It was noted Cort Hansen was to have the boxes constructed. They are already installed, now we need the laminated postings. Mr. Pinkham suggested getting a few extras, whatever they need for the changed locations.

f. Whitaker Video – No report.

g. Wetland Applications – Mr. Weathers reported DES has requested additional information with regard to Justin Hussey's restoration plan project – it is either in the floodplain or adjacent to a wetland area.

He noted that Hugh Hastings, representing Hale's Estates, is doing an upgrade and changing some culverts on the development off West Side Road. The State is requesting additional information, more detail on erosion and sediment control.

On the Jarwitz Rockhouse Mt. Estates project, the State has requested more information which if not received in a timely manner, will make the application null and void.

Cravedi – Application for shore line protection for a house lot on River Street in Conway Village to construct a single family house with a garage and deck. Approval was granted.

Joe Berry – Alteration of terrain regarding the Bancroft House site design – further information is being requested on an erosion control and sediment plan.

New Business: Mr. Adair said in Sept., as representative of MWV Bike Path Committee, he had requested and received a letter from the Commission in support of an off road link to the Intervale Post Office and Scenic Vista which would connect Whitaker Woods with the town's Hubbard-Davis conservation area. This would involve a segment on Dinsmore Road, a section next to the railroad tracks which is used nearly every day. The DOT wants a chain link fence put up. The length of the path is about one half mile. The existing trail is to the west side of the tracks, there is a vegetative buffer along there. The DOT is saying they will not talk to us until we have community support and engineered drawings.

Motion was made by Mr. Briggs, seconded by Ms. Kearney, that the Commission support the letter as proposed by Mr. Adair.

Mr. Weathers pointed out if they do not "buckle," the cost of removing the vegetation and putting up the fence is ridiculous. Mr. Adair stated that is not what we are asking for. He noted the owner of the railroad is not being supportive. Mr. Weathers questioned if you do nothing there and continue to use the trail the way it is now, what will happen? Mr. Adair said the State could come and block it off. The aim is to make it so that we have a community bike path with a sign that says Whitaker Woods ½ mile – some way to get there. **The Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Signs – Ms. Lyman reported she has been told that *Kearsarge* has been misspelled on the signs. Mr. Adair acknowledged the first “r” is missing. Ms. Lyman requested that we order new signs. The Chair agreed, but suggested finding out from Cort Hansen first if there are other signs that need to be replaced. Linda Kearney will follow up.

Ski Touring Permits – Ms. Lyman reported many people are cross country skiing without passes. Mr. Pinkham noted it does not hurt to point out this observation to the ski touring assn. It should be made clear where people can get passes.

Mr. Pinkham will contact USVLT and set a date with Mr. Sires.

Rules and Regulations – Ms. Lyman will try to fit it on one page.

5. Next Meeting – April 8, 2009.

6. Adjourn: Motion was made by Mr. Weathers, seconded by Ms. Lyman and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary