

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
June 9, 2010**

A meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Present were: Paul Pinkham, David Weathers, Karla Allen, Chuck Broomhall, Linda Kearney, and Alternate, Conrad Briggs. The Chair appointed Mr. Briggs a full voting member.

1. Approval of Minutes: 4/14/10 and 5/12/10 – Motion by Ms. Kearney, second by Ms. Allen, to approve the Minutes of April 14th and May 12th as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Reports:

a. Don Johnson – Mr. Pinkham stated that Mr. Johnson could not be present; however, he has communicated that he is awaiting approval to move the dumpster near the Abenaki site in order to gain access for the work to be done there. He will attempt to gain temporary approval, or enter through Hurricane Mt. Road. The president of the condominium assn. raises no objection to moving the dumpster, but it was thought some people may be concerned with the truck traffic.

Regarding orienteering, Mr. Johnson had expressed some concern with the white pine vegetation/roots with people going through there. Mr. Weathers stated the Town Manager has also been concerned about pioneering (bushwhacking). He stated if they cannot use existing trails he is not in favor of it. Mr. Pinkham said they can put some courses together to avoid those areas – we can make it a condition of the permit that they create courses that avoid regeneration areas. Mr. Weathers said we have to consider if we want them to establish a path – he is not in favor of that; if they can use the trail system it would be O.K. Ms. Allen said if they are doing true orienteering that would be defeating the purpose; if they had, for instance, twelve and every 3 or 4 they altered it, it would be fine – they are usually following a compass bearing and all would be slightly different bearings. If they miss the real target areas it would be fine. Mr. Pinkham said Mr. Federer has said they have yet to discover any significant damage to the vegetation.

Ms. Kearney suggested limiting the number of events. Mr. Pinkham felt instead they could be encouraged to use the trails, and be required to avoid the regeneration areas. He noted they have acknowledged damage is not something they are prone to do, and it is good recreation. It was agreed Mr. Pinkham would draft a letter, with conditions, with a copy to Messrs. Weathers and Sires, and see how that works.

Regarding pursuing easements, Mr. Johnson underscores the need to get easements going. Ms. Allen noted the head of the Conservation Commission in Francistown has worked with easements (they were the first ones to do their resource inventory), and offered to check with

her to see how they went about it. It was agreed that any information we can get would be helpful.

- b. Jeff Lougee** – Not present; no report.
- c. Treasurer’s Report** – Ms. Lyman not present; no report provided.
- d. Selectmen’s Report** – Mr. Weathers had nothing to report.

e. Member Roundtable – Ms. Kearney made comment that the CCC has a fair amount of money and she questions whether that money can be spent, for instance, in Walker’s Pond the sign needs to be redone. Mr. Pinkham said we have money specifically dedicated to certain things. He noted also the students from Pine Tree School have been out there cleaning the signs and putting Plexiglas on them. He said the Conservation Commission can retain money at the end of the year, but had agreed with the Selectmen to reduce the amount of savings we had put aside – there has been some reticence to having the CCC spend money for things. He stated if there is a need to put new signs in Walker’s Pond we can fix the signs or make new ones, but if we are going to have a program there, we should do it by design – we have the ability to do it, just need to budget for it. .

Ms. Kearney questioned, since we have all that money sitting here, whether we can use it to do some improvements? Mr. Pinkham noted there are three accounts: Conservation Account which we have to have approval to spend (in some cases we have not been allowed to retain our funds); Land Account, and the Hubbard-Davis Account Trust Fund (for the forest). As for Current Use Penalty funds, the CCC gets only 50% of that now, the other 50% goes to the town.

Ms. Allen questioned whether the Commission has ever done walks through the woods. Mr. Pinkham said we have done some at Whitaker, have had some work in the educational services program; if we want to spend money, we need to plan for it. Mr. Weathers said one of the biggest accounts is land acquisition, and that has to be used either for purchase or easements; however, that is the money that, if the town were ever really strapped, they could tap into.

Ms. Kearney noted the town beach and boat ramp at Conway Lake do not come under the CCC, but questioned whether there is anything like that that can come under our jurisdiction. She noted the beach and boat ramp are “crazy” and some kid is going to get run over there. Mr. Weathers said we had a committee ten or twelve years ago searching for something better than that beach and boat ramp. That is a certified State launch area that is adjacent to the beach. He explained the Selectmen removed the dock last year at the urging of our insurance carrier. He noted there was an effort to try to find another site that is safe and available – they could not come up with anything.

Ms. Kearney suggested buying a house on the lake, tearing it down, and putting in a boat ramp. Mr. Weathers stated that is up to the State. Ms. Kearney asked who is supposed to

look for such things? Mr. Pinkham said interested citizens. Mr. Weathers suggested going before the BOS asking to establish another committee to look into land acquisition, noting; however, that the CCC has never actively gone after any property. It was his opinion that we would be getting “more bang for our buck” by spending the money on easements. He pointed out also we would have the problem of dealing with DES if trying to establish a new beach.

Ms. Allen reported said she is on the Board of Project Learning Tree which is an organization that teaches teachers how to teach outdoor activities. They do a 4-year program, working off of grants, and have gone into school systems and worked with teachers and developed programs for getting the kids outside. She noted their annual meetings are always in the Concord area and questioned if they were to come to the north country for a meeting whether the CCC would be interested in being a part of that – they are concerned with how to get people to come north. It is an annual banquet, one night in November, where they review what they have done throughout the year.

Ms. Allen questioned whether the CCC would be interested in participating in some way, perhaps through advertising, trying to increase the audience. She said she would like to find a way to entice people to attend here, and suggested perhaps the CCC could offer a hike to people attending. Usually teachers and the forest industry are the ones who attend. Mr. Pinkham suggested she contact the local Chamber of Commerce as they might offer assistance in enticing people to come.

Mr. Pinkham said he has been contacted by Christine Lydecker of Pine Tree School who would like to see the students there get some recognition for the work they are doing at Walker’s Pond. As of the end of this week the benches, bird boxes and bat houses that the kids have built will be completed and put in place, and they may replace the Plexiglas on the signs this week as well. Also they have put together a power point presentation.

Mr. Weathers said they could bring them before the Selectmen, but he would want to take a look at what is out there before praising them for what they have done. Since the school year is nearly at an end and the Selectmen only meet every other week, Mr. Pinkham suggested the possibility that Mr. Sires and/or someone else go to the school. Mr. Weathers agreed that would be fine after they see what has been done at the site.

Mr. Pinkham reported the town wants to transfer ownership of the land that houses the District Court building to the State. A warranty deed and maintenance agreement have been drawn. The town is seeking input from the Commission. All present were in agreement with the proposal.

As regards orienteering, Mr. Pinkham will write a letter, with conditions, agreeing that the event can go forward, but that such events need to be documented one at a time, with a permit for each event.

4. Other Business:

a. Walker's Pond update – School kids are working on a project there. CCC needs to revisit trail marking.

b. Officer Election – Motion by Mr. Weathers, second by Ms. Kearney, that the positions remain as is. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Paul Pinkham – Chair, Rob Adair – Vice Chair, Carol Lyman – Treasurer.

c. Land Use Study – None.

d. Whitaker Trail Plan/5k progress – Don Johnson is seeing to this.

e. Trail Signs/Information Boards – None

f. Whitaker Video – None.

g. Wetlands Applications – None.

h. Rules & Regulations Posting - Ms. Lyman was to have checked with the ski touring folks to see where Rules and Regulations are posted.

5. Next Meeting – Motion by Mr. Weathers, second by Mr. Briggs, that the July meeting be deferred unless by necessity it is deemed important to meet. The next meeting would be August 11, 2010.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary