

**MINUTES OF MEETING
CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
October 9, 2013**

The October meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Whitaker Homesite in North Conway, NH. Members present were: Rob Adair, Carol Lyman, David Weathers, Linda Kearney, Dan Lucy, and Alternate, Matt Coughlan. The Chair appointed Mr. Coughlan a full voting member.

1. Approval of Minutes 9/11/13: Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Ms. Lyman, that the Minutes of the Sept. 11th meeting be accepted as circulated. Motion carried with 4 votes in the affirmative and 2 abstentions (Weathers and Adair).

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Reports: Neither Mr. Johnson or Mr. Lees was present.

4. Other Business:

a. 2014 Budget: Mr. Adair provided copies of the proposed budget for 2014 (\$15,200), which includes a suggested budget from Forest Land Improvement (\$12,025), and updating the Forest Management Plan to include Hurricane Mt. Road common lands. Ms. Allen affirmed that the figures provided seemed logical. She questioned the size of Compartments I, II, III common lands. Mr. Adair stated the total is almost 1000 acres. Mr. Weathers questioned whether there is anything included for work to be done at the scenic overlook near the former Elks Club in order to maintain that view. Mr. Adair acknowledged it is rather overgrown there. Regarding poison ivy at Shedd Woods, it was noted there had been some thought about spraying, but that has been reconsidered.

Mr. Weathers questioned what work was to be accomplished at the Hurricane Mt. Road landing with regard to creating an access across the brook. Mr. Adair stated the wetlands permitting requirements prevented the planned work there. He said the landing is not accessible now – the bridge was supposed to be removed when they cut in 2001. He noted it is easy to walk in to, you just cannot get equipment in there. Mr. Adair noted there was the suggestion of a portable bridge (which Don Johnson was intending to purchase and have available if we need it). Ms. Allen suggested if a need arose we could probably contact the logging companies in the area, or we could call Fish & Game and the Ranger Station, find out if Forest and Land has one. Mr. Weathers said he will check with the emergency management director, noting if we can get in with equipment it is a plus.

Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Lucy, that the Commission vote to accept the bottom line of the budget as presented, and forward same to the town.

Mr. Adair said he was not sure we would need the full \$3,000 for trail improvements in Whitaker Woods, so might be able to take some from there for the scenic overlook. Mr. Weathers pointed out that the quarterly report was reviewed yesterday showing the

Conservation Commission substantially unexpended, and questioned if Mr. Johnson had noted anything coming up in the future. It was noted also that Mr. Johnson had indicated we might not have to use all of the funds allocated for Red Tail Trail. Mr. Lucy commented there is nothing that prevents us from moving things around at a later date.

Mr. Lucy questioned what is planned for maintenance for Whitaker Woods. Mr. Adair stated we generally get together with Nat Lucy and Cort Hansen to decide on priorities. Ms. Allen offered to help with that on a weekend.

Mr. Adair reported Mr. Johnson had also asked whether we wanted to put anything into the DOT mitigation land, and he had suggested that Mr. Johnson do at least a walk-through and consider timber management. Mr. Weathers stated if the State does decide to put some of its land up for sale, it is not felt they would touch that parcel – he believes there is going to be quite a few of the pieces the State took go back on the market. Mr. Adair suggested leaving the bottom line as is and reallocate later if necessary. **Motion carried by unanimous vote.** Mr. Adair said he will meet with Earl Sires and Lucy Philbrick to present the budget.

Mr. Lucy questioned whether we should be thinking about reviewing work in Whitaker Woods. Mr. Adair said we need to revamp the Trail Committee, maybe including someone from ski touring, the mountain bike group, etc. He noted there is a priority list for Whitaker Woods and the ski touring foundation has indicated they would like us to continue along those lines. Mr. Lucy stated we should not wait until the November meeting, but should get a list for Don Johnson to work on as soon as he can get in there.

b. NHDOT Mitigation Lands: Mr. Adair said he has spoken with Jana Johnson from NEMBA who is still working on the mapping. He noted there is an open vault near the latrine building that we should do something to secure. He reported Earl Sires and Steve Swenson and he had walked in there to see where interpretive signs should go. He explained they used to use side dump carts along the rail lines and he would like to put a trail along the tops of these grout piles from the stone column to the former stone shed location near the lathe house. He said once the leaves drop it is wet through the fall – this would be a good way to have a high, dry trail there – it would be easy to do and also give people a good way to view some of the historical artifacts. Mr. Adair said he would like to see this get done this fall; volunteers would do the work. Mr. Coughlan noted the trail parallels the power lines and the double track, noting at the end of Mountain Road there is a chain across there and an old paved road that continues into the quarry. Mr. Adair said there had been discussion of a parking lot in there. He said he is in favor of a trail head at Mountain Rd. **Motion was made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to move forward with a grout pile trail.** Mr. Lucy questioned whether it is State owned property that we are managing. Mr. Weathers said they are relying on the town to manage that property, but they would retain ownership. Note was made that the snowmobile club has installed three gates to limit access in there; a grant has been obtained for security gates, interpretive signs, and trail signs. **Motion carried with 6 votes in the affirmative and 1 abstention (Adair).**

c. Selectmen's Report – Mr. Weathers noted in was reported at the Selectmen's meeting that there is excess money so we should do what we can to do projects within this year's budget.

d. Wetlands Applications: Mr. Weathers explained Washington Street is in the review process and a complete “redo” is being planned in conjunction with the Conway Village Precinct and NHDOT – replacing and doing some catch basins and culverts - if they do the upgrade and drainage project it will be turned back over to the town.

Mr. Weathers reported also the State has given approval for four applications for beach replenishment on Conway Lake, bringing in sand from outside sources.

e. Member Roundtable – Ms. Kearney questioned the situation regarding the house on Justamere Road where they were trying to secure the banking. Mr. Weathers said the State gave approval for what was done as a temporary project, the town wrote to the State and said they did not see the validity of it – the material was going directly into the Saco River. Mr. Weathers had even sent pictures to DES and did not get any response. He noted the erosion is accelerating.

Mr. Adair asked Ms. Kearney for a report on the Walker Pond area. She said she found the signage was intact, the trail entrance is slightly overgrown, trails in by the school are all in pretty good shape. Mr. Weathers noted we have not spent anything in there for a long, long time; if anything were to be done we would need to have a professional crew come in. Ms. Kearney said it would be nice if the sign were closer to the beginning of the parking lot so people would know it is there. She said it needs some trimming and professional tree removal, delineating the trail.

Ms. Kearney questioned whether we are going to do anything with the 11 acres piece off the North/South Road. Mr. Adair said we do not have access from North/South Rd., we can get to it off Sunset Hill Road, but it is very steep. He said there has been some suggestion of a bike path; however, north of that, once it gets funneled in, there is no place to go, but he felt it is worth taking a walk around there.

Mr. Adair reported Red Tail Trail is in remarkably good shape.

5. Next Meeting – The next regular meeting will be November 13, 2013.

Adjourn: There being no further business, **Motion was made by Ms. Kearney, seconded by Ms. Lyman and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier, Recording Secretary