

**CONWAY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 8, 2024**

The May monthly meeting of the Conway Conservation Commission convened at **6:30 PM** at the Whitaker Meeting House in North Conway, NH.

Present: Vice Chairman, Dan Lucy; Selectmen’s Representative, David Weathers; Treasurer, Linda Kearney; Rob Adair; Larry Huemmler; Peter Minnich; Paul Getchell; and Recording Secretary, Jacqueline White.

Absent: Chairman, Nat Lucy; and Corbett Tulip.

Also Attending: Tim Nolin, Forest Land Improvement; Peter Donohoe; and John Barley, NEMBA.

1. Approval of the Minutes for April 10, 2024:

Ms. Linda Kearney made a motion to accept the April 10, 2024 minutes as written; seconded by Mr. David Weathers. Motion passed (4-0-1) with Mr. Rob Adair abstaining.

2. Public Comment: None.

Mr. Paul Getchell arrived at 6:31 PM.
Mr. Peter Minnich arrived at 6:32 PM.

3. Reports & Other Business:

A. Whitaker Woods Salvage Harvest Bid Results:

Mr. Tim Nolin said three local contractors showed up for the Pre-Bid Meeting on Tuesday, April 30th and walked the harvest areas. Mr. Nolin stated a couple of issues have come up, one being the railroad. Mr. Nolin shared he first reached out to the Conway Scenic Railroad in the beginning of April. As there is no defined boundary to the State’s Right-of-Way for the Railroad and some of the dead trees are in this area and are hanging over the railroad. Mr. Nolin said he never heard back, so he reached out again, and the owner of the Conway Scenic Railroad said he would like to have those trees cut, but it is up to the State of New Hampshire to authorize the cutting or the potential of getting on to their land. The Conway Scenic Railroad has reached out to the State of New Hampshire Rail Bureau for permission, but has not heard back.

Mr. Rob Adair asked how imperative is it to get this logging done right now, other than the safety issue. Mr. Tim Nolin said he would like to get the job done before Whitaker Woods gets busier and the other reason is the tremendous white pine seed drop that occurred last Fall and that seed is going to be germinating next month. Mr. Nolin shared the goal is to get the ground disturbance done before or during the germination, because if we wait until the fall we will lose the opportunity with the pine seeds.

Mr. David Weathers asked about the liability issue if we don’t act now and we know there is a danger of these trees and or limbs dropping on the trails. Mr. Nolin stated if we get pushed off until fall, there will

not be a ton of limbs coming down between then and now, and the Town is making an effort to correct this potential hazard.

Mr. Tim Nolin stated two of the three companies that attended the Pre-Bid Meeting submitted bids by the deadline; Rotten Rock and Kheil Logging. Mr. Nolin described the differences between the bids, Kheil Logging being the highest bidder. Mr. Nolin said not only do they have the highest bid, but he has good experience working with them and they have done work in Whitaker Woods before.

Mr. Rob Adair stated he saw Cathie Gregg with the Elaine Connor's Center for Wildlife letter to the editor in the Conway Daily Sun and reached out to her a little over a week before the Conservation meeting. Ms. Gregg shared that spring is not a great time to do a timber harvest due to ~~ground-nesting birds nesting animals~~. Mr. Adair asked Ms. Gregg to write something up and he would bring it to the Conservation Commission meeting and read it, but he did not receive anything before the meeting. Mr. Tim Nolin said the area they are cutting is mostly open hard woods with no under story, so it's not a prime nesting area. Mr. Nolin shared his concern with waiting to the fall is we will lose the pine seeds that have dropped.

There was further discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of starting in the spring or waiting for the fall.

There was a brief discussion on how waiting for the fall would affect the bidding process.

Ms. Linda Kearney made a motion to approve Mr. Tim Nolin's recommendation of using the higher bidding company, Kheil Logging & Chipping, Inc.; getting permission from DOT Railroad in a reasonable time frame; and start by the end of the first week of June; seconded by Mr. David Weathers. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

There was a brief discussion on what the schedule would be if we had to wait until the fall.

Mr. Tim Nolin stated that during the Salvage Harvest Pre-Bid Meeting, he and Mr. Nat Lucy and Mr. Peter Donohoe discussed the potential of closing a trail. Mr. Peter Donohoe pointed at the Whitaker Woods Trail Map to show the area the trail is in, which runs parallel to Gradual Trail, but this trail is very steep, has a fair amount of erosion, is wet and rocky, and does not get groomed in the winter. Mr. Donohoe said this trail is a duplicate to Gradual Trail and Gradual Trail is in much better condition. Mr. Donohoe shared the only downfall to this is the White Mountain Milers have always used this trail instead of the Gradual Trail. Mr. Nolin said this trail is in the middle of the cutting area and the timing would be perfect if the Commission wanted to discontinue this trail.

There was a brief discussion on notifying the two organizations that have special event permits in Whitaker Woods this summer.

Mr. Rob Adair made a motion to abandon the duplicate trail to Gradual Trail as described by Mr. Peter Donohoe; seconded by Mr. Larry Huemmler. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

There was a brief discussion on posting signage to warn the public of the Salvage Harvest.

B. Proposed Multi-Use Trail in Redstone Quarry:

Mr. John Barley with NEMBA described a proposed multi-use trail that would be approximately ¼ mile long and will run parallel to the Swenson Trail. The proposed trail will be single track, hand built, and maintained by NEMBA.

Ms. Linda Kearney made a motion to approve the proposed multi-use trail in Redstone Quarry as described by Mr. John Barley; seconded by Mr. Rob Adair. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

C. Selectmen's Report:

Mr. David Weathers stated Mr. John Eastman asked him to take get feedback from the Commission on two parcels of land; Puddin Pond and Whitaker Woods. Mr. Weathers shared when Whitaker Woods was deeded to the Town, it was written in the deed to not allow hunting, specifically it says "shooting with any weapon or firearm on or into said property shall not be allowed except under the supervision of a conservation officer". Mr. Weathers said the Town Hall received an inquiry about hunting in Whitaker Woods, so Town Hall staff checked with the State of New Hampshire regarding posting no hunting signs. Mr. Weathers said they found out that for the No Hunting Signs to be enforced, they need to be placed every 300 feet around the entire perimeter of the property. Mr. Weathers asked the Commission if they are interested in putting up No Hunting Signs every 300 feet at these two properties or keep it the way it is now.

There was a brief conversation on the cost of the signs and the time it would take to install the signs.

The Commission decided to put signs at trail heads and not do the boundary at this time.

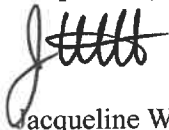
D. Member Roundtable:

Mr. Pau Getchell said he will know by early June if we received either of the grants he applied to for the signs at the Walker Pond Conservation Land.

Next Meeting: The next CCC meeting will be on Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 6:30 P.M. at the Whitaker Meeting House in North Conway, NH.

Adjourn: Ms. Linda Kearney made a motion to adjourn at 7:33 P.M.; seconded by Mr. Rob Adair. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Jacqueline White
Recording Secretary