



Town of Amherst, NH

Conservation Commission

Final Minutes

Barbara Landry Meeting Room

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

1 *Conservation Commission members in attendance were: Rob Clemens, John Harvey,*
2 *Frank Montesanto, Jared Hardner, Peter Lyon, Wes Robertson, Rich Hart.*
3 *Also in attendance: Kristan Patenaude*
4

5 **I. Call to Order**

6 Rob Clemens called the meeting to order at 6:59 PM.
7

8 **II. Minutes 5/9**

9 This item was tabled until the next meeting.
10

11 **III. Treasurer's Report – Review and reallocation of remaining 2017-18 budget** 12 *[Please refer to attached town budget documentation]* 13

14 *William Widmer and Lee Gilman arrived.*
15

16 Mr. Harvey stated that the Ventrac mower attachment costs \$3,401.70 and is currently in
17 process from the town budget, meadow maintenance line. A check will be cut to the
18 Recreation Dept from the ACC funds for this shortly.
19

20 There will also be money spent for the Forest Management Survey/Charlie Koch's expertise.
21 \$1,244/58 from the land management line and \$655 from the meadow maintenance line.
22 There will be more expenses for this item in the future.
23

24 VCS has made a bid for invasives management:

25 Great Meadow Phase I: \$4,992

26 Beaver Brook Park Phase II: \$1,500

27 Bragdon Farm: \$11,576

28 This money will come out of the conservation fund. VCS has a public rate in their contract
29 and Town Administrator O'Mara is willing to accept their state contract as a reason to make
30 them a sole source vendor.

31 The group discussed allowing for an extra variable for the work on Bragdon Farm, as they
32 will be grid searching on 35 acres and thus may go over the proposed amount.
33

34 The Commission discussed putting kiosks on the Caesar's Brook trail and at Lindabury
35 Orchard. Mr. Widmer also requested money to put a sign/small kiosk near the chestnut trees
36 that were recently planted.

37
38 Mr. Montesanto explained that money has already been approved for the Highland Bridge
39 renovation, but that Caesar's Brook will also need a few bridges to be built.

40
41 In response to a question from Mr. Lyon, Mr. Hardner explained that the current items being
42 paid for in regards to the Forest Management Plan are things leading up to the construction of
43 the Forest Management Plan, which will be paid for using the funds from warrant article 25.

44
45 Mr. Hardner requested getting a quote for some aluminum, colored "You Are Here" map
46 signs for certain trails. The Commission also discussed other signage and plaques to be
47 purchased with remaining funds.

48
49 Mr. Harvey stated that Professor Matt Tarr, the County Forester, and a biology expert from
50 Vermont are planning to hold a grasslands workshop the 3rd weekend of July. They will be
51 teaching interested members of the public to identify birds, count them, and how to estimate
52 trends in local bird species. The group will use 2-3 of the town's grasslands as examples. He
53 would like to pay for the travel and time of the expert from Vermont, roughly \$1,000, from
54 the education/training line.

55
56 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Robertson and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman to approve the*
57 *bids raised for the Great Meadow and Beaver Brook invasives work.*

58 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

59 *[Mr. Montesanto voting in place of Mr. Bennison]*

60
61 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Gilman to approve the Bragdon Farm invasive work as quoted,*
62 *with the option to add a small supplemental amount if advised in advance.*

63
64 *An AMENDMENT was made to this motion by Mr. Hardner and SECONDED by Mr. Gilman*
65 *to approve up to \$12,000 from the Conservation Fund for invasive species management on*
66 *the Bragdon Farm property.*

67 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

68
69 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Robertson and SECONDED by Mr. Montesanto to approve the*
70 *other items as listed on the additional ACC budget document for use from the town operating*
71 *budget.*

72 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

73 74 **IV. Round Table**

75 Mr. Robertson made a request for a kiosk to be placed at the Spring Road/town of Merrimack
76 trailhead (Woolsey property). Mr. Clemens requested more information on this item for the
77 next meeting.

78

79 Mr. Montesanto explained that there is an Eagle Scout project being planned to put in two
80 bridges in Pond Parish. The Eagle Scout is requesting to use cinderblocks instead of natural
81 rocks from the area for the bridges. Mr. Clemens asked that there be practical alternatives
82 available to the Eagle Scout for this project, but that the Commission would prefer to see
83 natural stones.

84
85 Mr. Montesanto also explained that the staircase on Nathaniel built as a past Eagle Scout
86 project, is a little too steep and the granite slabs used to build it are shifting. He plans to take
87 pictures of the issues and ask the Eagle Scout to fix it.

88
89 Mr. Harvey explained that he has replaced the defaced canoe landing sign by the high school.
90 Mr. Harvey also stated that the Ventrac mower attachment will be operated by the Recreation
91 Department, and that they have agreed to give the ACC 2 days per month of mowing work
92 with it. He would like for the group to come up with a list of which areas they would like
93 done.

94
95 Mr. Hardner stated that there was a site walk of the Taylor/Bower easement last weekend.
96 They noted how the new area could connect to Hammond Brook and up to Mack Hill Road
97 with an area for parking and a kiosk. They are awaiting a final revision of the easement for
98 legal review and then will work on getting an updated appraisal.

99
100 Mr. Clemens explained that the ACC was asked to manage the Buchanan Park area when it
101 was donated to the town. The deed has language restricting permanent structures/recreational
102 playsets; however Mr. Craig Fraley contacted the original property owners who stated that
103 they have no issue with a bocce ball court being installed on the land.

104
105 Mr. Clemens stated that he received a call from Bob Choquette who lives at 33 Brook Road,
106 regarding a mountain biker who has been cutting across his property to go into the
107 conservation land near there. He also believes it's possible that this person has been moving
108 rocks from the stone wall there in the process. He has spoken to the police regarding this
109 issue, but wanted the ACC to be aware as well.

110
111 Mr. Widmer stated that 5 chestnut trees were planted last weekend by some girl scouts and
112 their parents.

113
114 The group discussed looking at the requirements to make one of the town's trails ADA
115 compliant. This will be further discussed at a future meeting.

116
117 *The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.*

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122
123 *Respectfully submitted,*
124 *Kristan Patenaude*