

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH

June 13, 2019

7:00 PM Council Chambers

Members Present: Patrick Reynolds (Chair), Melissa Sharples, Drew Kiefaber (Alternate), Sarah Finch (Planning Board Rep), and Casey Finch (Town Council Rep – Ex-Officio)

Members Absent: Marianne Hannagan (Vice Chair), Cris Blackstone, and Sam Kenney were excused.

Call to Order: 7:02 PM

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**

2. **Roll Call**

The Chair appointed **Drew Kiefaber** as a voting member for this evening.

3. **Public Comments**

Jeff Goldknopf, 117 Ash Swamp Road, came to the meeting this evening to discuss the seasonal migration of turtles across Ash Swamp Road in the area of his home. He and his wife regularly report turtles, especially Blandings and Spotted, through the NH Fish and Game reporting system (<https://nhwildlifesightings.unh.edu/>). Hearing cars slow or stop, they always go out and check for hits or if turtles need assistance in moving across the road. In general, the activity is growing in this area. There are two culverts in the area covered with mesh and filled with debris that cannot permit turtles passing (if they will even go through a culvert). He suggested that the CC might invite a wildlife biologist specializing in reptiles from F&G to speak at a meeting. F&G may have some suggestions about making 'turtle crossings' safer. The Chair will reach out to F&G for suggestions.

The Chair asked to revise the agenda to accommodate items from Old/New Business.

There was no objection.

8. **Old/New Business**

Request for an Expedited Wetland Permit: Ms. Britt Eckstrom, P.E., Project Manager from Wright- Pierce Engineering, has come before the CC at the request of the Town to seek support for an expedited permit associated with pilot testing at the Town-owned Tucker Property which includes the Tucker Well site. There is no direct access to the property to be tested. The Town is interested in assessing the water to determine if it is a viable drinking water source for the Town. In order to complete the testing, equipment must be brought to the site (well pump, trailer, equipment, and generator for power) for approximately a two week period. The area does have several endangered or threatened species (Blandings turtles and the Northern Long-eared Bat, as well as several important plant species) and the area has been designated by the Town as Prime Wetland. Wright-Pierce proposes to use untreated timber mats at the low flow period of the water (which usually occurs in August) to take the equipment across to the testing sites. They have consulted with NHDES and NHB. The permit has been submitted to NHDES to get the project rolling. They would like to ask the CC to support the 20 day holding period associated with prime wetlands.

Action

Motion: **Sarah Finch** moved that the Conservation Commission support the expedited permit for the Tucker Well Crossing.

Second: Melissa Sharples

Vote: Approved 4-0-0

The Chair will sign the application, include a letter of support, and take it to the Town Office.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

May 9, 2019

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds moved that the minutes of May 9, 2019 be approved as drafted.

Second: Drew Kiefaber

Vote: Approved 4-0-0

5. **Treasurer's Report**

The Chair reported that several expenses were reported on the new financial statement: the Heron Point Gate, the 8th Grade Field Trip, the NHACC Annual Dues, and the transfer of funds for the Newmarket Fishing Derby. Two current use changes have been recorded: 28 Neal Mill Road on 5/13/2019 for \$5,700.00 and 29 Doe Farm Lane on 3/18/2019 for \$5,750.00. The Schoppmeyer Park balance on 5/30/2019 is \$18,298.00. The Conservation Commission Fund currently has a balance of \$319,444.74.

6. **Committee and Subcommittee Reports**

Town Council: Casey Finch reports that the lights in the Town Hall are all being changed to LED as part of the energy audit. The lights have sensors and will shut off automatically to save money. The TC was setting goals and as part of this discussion they were considering the water front area. That discussion included Schanda Park. The Town would like to know if the CC would like to pass on the maintenance responsibilities of Schanda Park to the Town. The Chair said he would be in favor of the Town assuming the day-to-day maintenance of Schanda, but the CC would need to still be responsible for approval of any major repairs or changes (i.e. the sea wall repairs). **Drew Kiefaber** believes that working with the Town on this type project will provide continuity and retain institutional memory for both the Town and Commission.

Action

Motion: Patrick Reynolds moved that the Conservation Commission support the Town looking into assuming maintenance responsibility of Schanda Park, doing any further study that they wish, and how they might integrate that strategy into a water front plan.

Second: Melissa Sharples

Vote: Approved 4-0-0

The CC will look forward to hearing back from the Town once they have thoughts on a plan.

Planning Board: Sarah Finch reported that the PB voted to support the permit from Wright-Pierce on the Tucker Well Crossing application. The proposed golf driving range and practice area project for 10 Norton Lane was withdrawn from consideration, so no site walk was held on May 14.

7. **Chairman's Report**

Update on Schoppmeyer Park: Richie Shelton reported to the Chair that the docks are in place now, the new signage is up, they are looking at a site for the kayak rack, the Boy Scouts will be moving picnic tables into the small wooded area, and an Eagle Scout will be putting up a flag pole with a solar light. Great progress!

Pick-Up Pet Waste: The Chair received a request to remind people to remove pet waste while walking their pets. Not just on Conservation Properties, but all around Town on private or public lands. Pet waste pollutes

our rivers and streams and can become a serious public health hazard.

30th Annual Newmarket Fishing Derby: The 30th Annual Newmarket Fishing Derby is happening this Saturday, June 15 at 30 Langs Lane. The siren will sound at 7:00 am, so watch out for flying hooks!
<http://www.newmarketrec.org/newmarket-annual-fishing-derby/> There are some great prizes this year!

8. Old/New Business

Request for Use of Schanda Park: The Recreation Department has submitted a request for use of Schanda Park for the **Arts in the Park** (<http://www.newmarketrec.org/summer-concert-series/>) on Tuesday evenings from 6-8 pm from July 2 through August 27 and the **Lamprey River Splash and Dash** (<http://www.newmarketrec.org/lamprey-river-plash-dash/>) on Saturday, July 27, 2019. They will occupy the Park from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

Action

Motion: **Patrick Reynolds** moved that Conservation Commission approved the application for use of Schanda Park by Newmarket Recreation for the annual *Arts in the Park* concerts and the annual *Lamprey River Splash and Dash* dates.

Second: **Drew Kiefaber**

Vote: Approved 4-0-0

2019 Conservation Commission Photo Contest: **Melissa Sharples** reports that the sub-com is closing in on the date of July 20 for the bus tour. They are now reaching out to the New Market Historical Society and asking to get an article in the Town Newsletter seeking docents to position at each location to talk about the history of the land. A flyer is being prepared to be handed out at the Fishing Derby this weekend.

Non-Public Session:

A motion to go into non-public session to discuss confidential matters related to real estate, pursuant for RSA 91-A:3, II(c), was made by **Patrick Reynolds**, seconded by **Melissa Sharples**, and approved 4-0-0 at 7:40 pm.

A motion to end the non-public session at 8:34 pm was made by **Patrick Reynolds**, seconded by **Melissa Sharples**, and approved 4-0-0.

A motion to seal the notes of the non-public session was made by **Patrick Reynolds**, seconded by **Melissa Sharples**, and approved 4-0-0.

9. Adjourn

Action

Motion: **Drew Kiefaber** moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Second: **Patrick Reynolds**

Vote: 4-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary