

Conservation Commission Approved Minutes April 12, 2012

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NH

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

April 12, 2012

7:00PM Council Chambers

Members Present: Drew Kiefaber (Chairman), Bruce Fecteau (Vice Chair), Fred Pearson, Jeff Goldknopf, Jessica Veysey (Alternate), Donald Tucker (Alternate), Janice Rosa (Planning Board Rep), Dan Wright (Town Council Rep)

Members Absent: George Hilton and Stephanie Coster, excused

Called to Order: 7:03PM

Agenda Items:

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Drew Kiefaber nominated Donald Tucker as a voting member in the absence of George Hilton. Drew Kiefaber welcomed the new Town Council Representative, Dan Wright, the new Planning Board Representative, Janice Rosa, to their first Conservation Commission meeting.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mar. 8, 2012: There were no recommended changes to the draft minutes.
Action

Motion: Jeff Goldknopf made a motion to approve the minutes with no changes.

Second: Drew Kiefaber

Abstained: Fred Pearson, Janice Rosa, and Dan Wright due to absence at the meeting.

Vote: All others in favor.

5. Treasurer's Report

There was a review of the monthly financial report and general discussion surrounding the allocation of expenses. Jeff Goldknopf explained that most of the prior accounting issues have been corrected and the balance reflected on the current month's report should remain stable going forward.

6. Committee Reports

Planning Board – Janice Rosa reported on several anticipated proposals coming before the Planning Board, including development proposals for the golf course, a residential property on Elm Street, and the property that formerly housed Joyce's Kitchen. She will update the Commission on the progress of these proposals as they relate to environmental conservation. She announced several openings on Planning Board subcommittees, including a newly formed landscaping subcommittee and another subcommittee to explore re-zoning opportunities for the 108 corridor through the center of town. There are two openings for Alternates on the Planning Board as well. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Janice Rosa.

Town Council – Nothing to report.

7. Chairman's Report

Wiggin Farm Encroachment: Drew Kiefaber has made several attempts to reach the property owner but has not been successful.

Application for usage of Schanda Park: A formal application has been submitted by Jerry Collins for usage of Schanda Park from April through May 15 to assemble a fishing weir for placement in the Lamprey River. Mr. Collins has historically been granted approval by the Conservation Commission this time each year for access and usage of Schanda Park.

Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to sign the request for Jerry Collins to use Schanda Park between April and May 15 for the assembly of the fishing weir.

Second: Janice Rosa

Vote: All in favor.

8. Old/New Business

Election of Officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer

Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to nominate Drew Kiefaber as Chair of

the Conservation Commission for the next year.

Second: Fred Pearson

Vote: All in favor.

There were no other nominations.
Action

Motion: Fred Pearson made a motion to nominate Bruce Fecteau as Vice Chair of

the Conservation Commission for the next year.

Second: Drew Kiefaber

Vote: All in favor.

There were no other nominations.
Action

Motion: Drew Kiefaber made a motion to nominate Jeff Goldknopf as Treasurer of

the Conservation Commission for the next year.

Second: Fred Pearson

Vote: All in favor.

There were no other nominations.

Fishing Derby funding request: The Conservation Commission contributed \$1,500 last year in sponsorships for the Fishing Derby and a new request has been received for this year's derby. Jessica Veysey suggested delaying the vote on this request to allow for simultaneous discussion of the Oyster Reef Restoration funding request, as it would allow the group to ensure that the allocation of funds are in line with the commission's purpose and mission. Discussion ensued around the merits of the Fishing Derby sponsorship for the community and Fred Pearson recommended exploring some opportunities to undertake public outreach or education during this year's event. Drew Kiefaber acknowledged the suggestion as a good one but decided that each request would be considered and voted on separately.
Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to appropriate \$1,500 for the Fishing Derby to be used by them in the manner they see fit, for either general expense of the stocking of fish.

Second: Fred Pearson

Vote: All in favor.

Oyster Reef Restoration funding request: The Nature Conservancy submitted a written request for funding of this year's Oyster Reef Restoration projects. Because some of their funding sources from past projects are no longer available they are seeking a contribution of \$5,000. Discussion ensued around the merits of continuing financial support of the project and how to address future requests. By continuing financial support for this project, it may help the town with the ongoing issue of the waste water treatment upgrades being mandated by DES. Oyster reefs serve as an effective filter in the bay and the town's continued support of these projects demonstrate a willingness to undertake efforts that address the problem. Further discussion centered on the appropriate level of funding to approve.
Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to fund the Oyster Reef Restoration Project for \$5,000

Second: Fred Pearson

Vote: Donald Tucker, Dan Wright, Janice Rosa opposed. All others in favor.

Stewardship monitoring – Silverman-Schneer: The final report is pending completion.

Letter for Southeast Land Trust of NH Accreditation: The accreditation process requires public comment from any entity that has worked with Southeast Land Trust in the past. Because of their relationship to the Conservation Commission, the state is soliciting signed, written comments by May 18 on the compliance of the Southeast Land Trust. Jeff Goldknopf questioned whether it would be best to have Commissioners provide comments individually through the website or draft a letter from the Commission as a whole. Bruce Fecteau suggested that the Chair draft a letter on behalf of the Commission, as well as allow Commissioners with direct experience working with Southeast Land Trust to submit individual comments online. Drew Kiefaber agreed to draft the letter and review it at next month's meeting. Individuals are welcome and encouraged to comment as they see appropriate.

Letter for funding educational opportunities: Jeff Goldknopf distributed the draft letter for review by the group and recommended that a reserve account be set up so that the funds can be monitored and closed out. Jeff Goldknopf expressed concern for time constraints for requests with less than one month's notice. The group agreed that educators should be encouraged to submit their requests well in advance without requiring special meetings or express review from the Commission. Jeff Goldknopf agreed to make the appropriate edits and send the letter as soon as possible.

Ongoing Conservation Commission activities: Stephanie Coster compiled a summary of the Commission's goals and current activities for review by the group. Drew Kiefaber asked for suggestions on the best way to prioritize the list. Jessica Veysey suggested that the group review and prioritize the list independently for discussion at the next meeting. Drew Kiefaber requested that each Commission member select only 5 items from the list, with 5 being the highest priority and 1 being the lowest priority. Drew Kiefaber will ask Stephanie Coster to add her 4 newly suggested items to the list and redistribute the complete list to the group. This will be added to next month's agenda.

Action Item List

- Budget committee separating costs – on Activities List, pending further action until next meeting and defined priorities
- Dog waste signage – signs ordered this week
- Eagle Scout project – Drew Kiefaber has been in contact with NH Audubon and reported that they are very interested in working together to develop a project proposal
- Lighting in Schanda Park flag pole – Jeff Goldknopf emailed Alan Schneider for lighting recommendations; response pending
- Smith Sisters Property – Jessica Veysey reported that abutters appear to have cut down saplings and bushes on the entryway to the property as well as what appears to be a burn pile; Drew Kiefaber will follow up on this report
- Janice Rosa agreed to take over Val Shelton's Action Items

Other Business

Fred Pearson reported there has been no new vandalism at Heron Point but the potholes are in bad shape. He contacted Public Works, who agreed to fill them in. Fred Pearson also noted that some of the landscaping in Schanda Park has been stolen or vandalized. He offered to recommend a Master Gardener who may be willing to look at the park and provide some suggestions for new plantings pro bono. Jeff Goldknopf asked for suggestions of native plants for tidal areas that will be beneficial to the local wildlife.

Bruce Fecteau reported that scholarship applications have been mailed and are also available at the Town Hall and the school. He will provide further updates at the next meeting.

9. Adjournment
Action

Motion: Bruce Fecteau made a motion to adjourn.

Second: Drew Kiefaber

Vote: All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:48PM.
The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 05/10/12 at 7PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky LaPense