

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- August 20, 2015

Minutes Approved on- September 17, 2015

Present: Valerie Germain, Jon Manley, Stephen Willette

Valerie Germain called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

1. Minutes

- a. The minutes from the June 18, 2015 meetings were approved as written.

2. Old Business

a. VFW/Depot Project

- i. At this time there are no updates to report.

b. UNH Barry Conservation Camp

- i. Valerie reported that Victoria Marchand enjoyed her time at the UNH Barry Conservation Camp. The Commissioners would like to invite Victoria to the September meeting to share about her experience.

c. Railroad Trestle

- i. Jon reported that there has been mention of installing higher gates to discourage use. The DOT has declared the bridge to be unsafe and may even close the bridge from snowmobile use. Prior to the deck being placed, DOT and the owner were not contacted.

d. Invasive Species Eradication

- i. At this time Stephen has not mapped any further species.
- ii. Jon proposed obtaining pamphlets on knotweed in order to educate owners who have some on their property.

3. New Business

a. Planting in Bruce Edes Forest

- i. Valerie reported that she had been contacted by Marion Rogers regarding planting a Bridalwreath Spirea for Kate Edes and Ben Rogers wedding that will take place in September. The Commissioners discussed and viewed potential locations. Marion will be contacted with the approval for the planting. The Commissioners will obtain a date from Marion for the planting and will suggest planting the shrub at the side of the forest rock.

b. Crotched Mountain Trail Maps & Maintenance

- i. Valerie met with Fire Chief Roina regarding the need for maps of the trails. Emergency responders had an incident that required them to locate lost individuals on the trails. Valerie contacted Ben Haubrauch who has a map of some of the trails. It was noted that some of the trails have not been maintained and are in need of having markers being visible. The Commissioners will meet with the Chief to review the map and see what information will be beneficial for responders such as clearly marked fire access roads.

c. Frankestown Conservation Commissioners

- i. Ben Haubrauch and the Frankestown Conservation Commissioners would like to work with the Bennington Conservation Commissioners regarding land that is suitable for conservation. Jon will reach out to property owners in those areas. An invitation to the September 17, 2015 meeting will be made for 6:45 p.m.

d. Bennington Fire Department Controlled Burn

- i. The Bennington Fire Department would like to do a controlled burn located on Town property on Old Stagecoach Rd this fall. The deed has not been transferred to the Town at this time.

- e. Crotched Mountain Outreach
  - i. Valerie reported she had contacted Pat Terry as a private citizen regarding herbicide spraying and killdeer habitat. Pat Terry has been in contact with Valerie and is open to any suggestions. It was reported that spraying had been done instead of using a York rake on the Crotched Mountain Ski Resort parking lots. Valerie extended an invitation to Pat Terry for any interest working in collaboration with the Commissioners on projects.
- f. Natural Resources Inventory
  - i. Valerie invited any Commissioners who have not had the chance to view Frankestown's Natural Resources Inventory as it is available to view on their town website. It is a comprehensive inventory that was completed by Southwest Regional.
  - ii. Valerie has made contact with several individuals regarding funding to complete an inventory for Bennington. It was noted that Southwest Regional members can receive a significant discount. She proposed placing money in next year's budget for this project. Jon will email Valerie regarding funding opportunities from information received by the River Committee.
  - iii. Jon suggested a starting place with this project is with an inventory of the water resources in Town.
- g. GBS 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Opportunity
  - i. Valerie shared correspondence from Paul Bolduc, GBS 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science Teacher. Paul is reaching out to surrounding towns as Harris Center funding has been cut. He is seeking opportunities for students to complete research studies in interested towns. The Commissioners were interested in this opportunity for the students. Valerie suggested leaving possible research opportunities up to Paul Bolduc's discretion. Jon suggested opportunities for tree identification and opportunities to measure trees in the Forest.
- h. Annual Bruce Edes Walk
  - i. The Commissioners set September 19, 2015 at 9 a.m. as a tentative date for the annual Bruce Edes walk.
  - ii. It was suggested to use this date as an opportunity to clean up trails in the Bruce Edes Forest.
- i. Correspondence
  - i. NH Municipal Association's 2015 Municipal Law Lectures Series- pamphlet was shared with Commissioners.
  - ii. FEMA letter dated June 10, 2015- event had passed.
  - iii. Mason Conservation Commissioners- request to sign petition against the Kinder Morgan gas line project. Signature date had passed.
  - iv. Victoria Marchand- Thank you card received for the opportunity to attend the UNH Barry Conservation Camp. Valerie noted that a Bruce Edes Scholarship had been awarded that covered the remainder of the tuition cost.
- j. Other
  - i. Jon reported that there are many trees down in the river. There is a need to enlist help to remove/clear the downed trees.
  - ii. Jon noted that the bridge in the Bruce Edes Forest is in need of repairs. He has materials he is willing to donate.

There being no other business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Bartlett  
 Conservation Commission Recording Secretary