

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting- May 26, 2016
Minutes Approved on- June 16, 2016

Present: John Baybutt, Valerie Germain, and Jon Manley
Guest: Bethany Craig- Recreation Department Co-Chair
Jeff Littleton- Moosewood Ecological

Chairman John Baybutt called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

1. Minutes

- a. The minutes from the April 21, 2016 meeting were approved as written. Chairman Baybutt thanked Valerie Germain for taking the minutes at the April meeting.

2. Whittemore Beach

a. Replenishing Town Beach sand

- i. Bethany Craig approached the Commissioners seeking approval and signatures on the Recreation Department's State permit requesting less than 10 cubic yard of beach sand to replenish the existing beach front. The sand was last replenished over a decade ago.
- ii. Gary Russell from the Highway Department estimates the cost to be \$60 per truck load of sand. The proposed amount of sand is approximately one truck load.
- iii. Jon Manley had no objections to the permit, but recused himself.
- iv. As there were no objections, Chairman Baybutt signed the permit. The permit will be submitted to the State for approval.

b. Lifeguards

- i. Bethany Craig reported that the Recreation Department is not opposed to hiring lifeguards for the beach. At the minimum, a beach attendant will be hired. The beach attendant will be expected to rake the beach, oversee and enforce beach policies, and enforce residential use only.

3. NRI

- a. Jeff Littleton from Moosewood Ecological met with the Commissioners regarding Natural Resource Inventories. He shared with the Commissioners his background and several examples of NRI's that he has completed. A basic NRI's cost is around five- to six-thousand dollars depending upon what is specifically being created. Throughout the process of creating the NRI, Jeff is open to holding a community forum, along with a final presentation when the NRI is completed. Part of the NRI includes identification of conservation focus areas and recommendations for the Town to consider.
- b. Jeff creates Natural Resource Inventories that are specific to each of the communities he works with and sees these reports as a way to educate the community, residents, and other boards about the resources in the Town. The NRI contains map-based information along with narratives. He recommends that Towns focus on the following resources: water, wildlife, agriculture, and forest.

- c. The Conservation Commissioners shared with Jeff the 1990 Inventory that was created. It was asked if it is better to start fresh or if information previously collected could be of use. Jeff informed the Commissioners that he begins the NRI process by collecting anything the Town has already collected as a starting place.
- d. The Commissioners may be interested in breaking the process into more than one phase. Jeff recommended beginning with the wetlands data layer, grasslands data layer, and revising the fragmented lands.
- e. The Commissioners asked Jeff to follow up with a proposal outlining the NRI in a couple phases with the understanding that the voters have approved a warrant article for \$3000.00 this year. Jeff will have this proposal to the Commissioners to review at their next meeting.

4. Other

- a. Jon Manley shared the perambulation's team discovery of the location of a waterfall along the Greenfield-Bennington line off of Dodge Rd.

There being no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Bartlett
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary