

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- August 18, 2016

Minutes Approved on- September 15, 2016

Present: John Baybutt, Jon Manley, Stephen Willette, Joseph MacGregor, and Valerie Germain

Guests: Leslie Hodgen, Allison Hodgen, and Mikala Mackesy

Chairman John Baybutt called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

1. Harris Camp Scholarship

- a. Allison Hodgen was a recipient of the camp scholarship offered by the Conservation Commission. She met with the Commissioners to share her experiences at the Harris Summer Camp. She had fun time hiking different mountains, swimming, canoeing, learning about plants, and learning how to identify ground hornet nests.
- b. The Conservation Commissioners thanked Allison for sharing her experience with them and encouraged her to share her experience with other students for next year.
- c. Leslie Hodgen thanked the Conservation Commissioners for making this opportunity available to Bennington children.

2. Minutes

- a. The minutes from the June 16, 2016 meeting were approved as written.

3. NRI

- a. The Conservation Commissioners reviewed the NRI proposals submitted by Jeff Littleton from Moosewood Ecological, and Henry Underwood from Southwest Region Planning Commission. It was noted that the proposal from Jeff Littleton broke the NRI down into two phases for \$6,000. Phase two included the incorporation of work to identify conservation parcels. The proposal from Henry Underwood was quoted at \$6,800.
- b. The Conservation Commissioners would like to incorporate components that are critical to the needs of Bennington in phase one. They would like to have phase one completed in time for the March Town elections in order for the townspeople to see what has been completed and encouraged to move forward with a phase two.
- c. A motion was made for the Conservation Commission to hire Jeff Littleton to produce a NRI for Bennington. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. The Conservation Commissioners will come to the September meeting having reviewed the proposal and identified critical components for phase one.

4. Town Calendar
  - a. Information has been provided to both Kristie LaPlante and Melissa Searles in order to update meeting information provided on the town website and information at the Town Hall.
  - b. It was noted that the VFW does not have Wi-Fi access. There is a BTO-private connection that is password protected. Access to this connection will be inquired about.
  
5. Earth Day
  - a. It is the Conservation Commission's goal to have this celebration expand to include educational activities and a focus on conservation work. One area that the Conservation Commissioners would like to explore is trying different methods to eradicate invasive species. Stephen Willette shared with the Commissioners that he has been in contact with a member of the Dublin Conservation Commission that has done extensive work with eradicating knotweed. The State of New Hampshire prioritizes and eradicates invasive species on State roads. Stephen will make contact and invite them to the Commissioners next meeting. The Commissioners would like to hear about the different methods that may help to eradicate the species Stephen Willette has identified in the Town.
  - b. Joseph MacGregor, Jon Manley, and John Baybutt will meet on Saturday, August 20, 2016 at 9 a.m. to cut back invasive species at the VFW before they go to seed.
  
6. Bruce Edes Walk
  - a. The Conservation Commissioners set the Bruce Edes walk for September 10, 2016.
  - b. This event will be posted on the Town signs.
  
7. Geo cache
  - a. It was noted that there is a geo cache located in the Bruce Edes Forest.
  
8. Chairman and member positions
  - a. Chairman Baybutt proposed electing a new chairman. As not all members were at the meeting, the discussion was tabled for the September meeting. It is possible that the position could be shared.
  - b. It was noted that there is one member position still open.

There being no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Bartlett

Conservation Commission Recording Secretary