

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- February 16, 2017

Minutes Approved on-

Present: Valerie Germain, Stephen Willette, Tom James, Jon Manley, and Joe MacGregor

Co-Chair Stephen Willette called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

1. Warrant Article- NRI Phase II

- a. Joe MacGregor and Valerie Germain spoke at the Town Deliberative Session regarding the Warrant Article for funds for the NRI Phase II and shared three maps that were created during Phase I.
- b. The Commissioners considered sending out a mailing to inform the voters about the NRI Phase II as it will assist and inform decision making for the Town. The mailing will clarify the warrant article wording so that voters know that Phase II is for the completion of the NRI not the development of one.
- c. Valerie Germain will contact Melissa Searles regarding placing the maps on the Town website. The Commissioners also discussed displaying the maps outside on election day and/or at the Bennington Garage. Valerie Germain informed the Commissioners that the third-grade teacher at Pierce Elementary is interested in using the maps with her class.

2. Calendar

- a. Mike Munhall has put together a google calendar for the Conservation Commissioners that includes goals for the year. Co-Chair Valerie Germain will forward this to the Commissioners. Events that are currently on the calendar were reviewed.
- b. The Commissioners made a motion to set September 9, 2017 as a tentative date for the Annual Bruce Edes Walk, all were in favor. The Commissioners discussed incorporating an education talk to pair with the Walk.
- c. The Commissioners considered a summer project to update the map for the Bruce Edes Forest and the possibility of creating additional trails.
- d. Mike included Annual contract with Crotched Mountain for cooperative work. The Commissioners will follow up with Mike to better understand what this refers to.
- e. Co-Chair Valerie Germain proposed adding to the calendar meeting with Frankestown Land Trust and Conservation to stay up-to-date with their work. The Commissioners felt this would be very beneficial. Co-Chair Valerie Germain will contact them to set possible dates.
- f. The Commissioners will invite the River Committee to the river paddle float.
- g. Depending on the weather, the Hancock-Bennington line perambulation was set for April 1, 2017. Tom Glauderman and the Bogue family will be contacted as their properties abut the Town Line

3. Earth Day
 - a. Jon Manley proposed holding the Town wide Earth Day celebration on April 29, 2017 as there are science marches on April 22, 2017 that a Commissioner is wanting to attend. Co-Chair Stephen Willette made a motion to set April 29, 2017 as the tentative date for the Town wide Earth Day celebration, all were in favor.
4. Bruce Edes Forest
 - a. Co-Chair Valerie Germain notified the Commissioners that the school will be snow shoeing in the Forest.
 - b. It was noted that there has been beaver activity in the Forest this winter.
5. Minutes
 - a. The minutes from the January 19, 2017 meeting were approved with minor amendments.
6. Camper Applications
 - a. The Commissioners voted to table this discussion in order for Mike Munhall to be in attendance.
7. Goals for 2017
 - a. Updating the Bruce Edes Forest map
 - b. Updating the Town website Conservation Commission links for the Bruce Edes Forest
 - c. Improve the green box display at the VFW possibly with a kiosk – map, invasive species information
 - d. Outreach Community program – collaboration with Library? School? Bringing in guest speakers
 - e. Education aspect for Bruce Edes Forest Walk and Earth Day
 - f. Collaboration with Frankestown Land Trust
 - g. Trail Maps for Crotched Mountain for emergency uses
 - h. Identify land in Town to be conserved
 - i. Establish a Conservation Land Acquisition Fund – NH Municipal Conservation Fund Guidebook
 - j. Railroad Trestle/Bridge access – NH Rail Trails and NH Bike Paths highlight Bennington access points
 - k. Warrant article to direct the Selectmen to allocate part of the unanticipated Timber and Gravel Tax collected to be placed into a conservation fund

As there was no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Bartlett

Conservation Commission Recording Secretary