

**Town of Jackson  
Conservation Commission Minutes  
Regular Meeting - November 6, 2023 - 5:30PM  
(Unofficial Until Approved)**

Present: Pam Smillie, Ben Halcyon, Richard Bennett, Mike Dufilho, Ken Kimball and Brian Byrne.

Attendees: Hank Benesh, Jennifer Pribble

The meeting was called to order.

**Approval of Minutes:**

October 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Ken made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as written, seconded by Brian. All approved.**

**Prospect Farm:**

October was a busy month at Prospect Farm. Rick Davis mowed the pasture at the Orchard and Hall's Ledge Overlook. There was a discussion on the timing of the mowing, Rick would like to do it after Labor day. Mike mentioned that initially it had been earlier in the summer but moved to later in season to accommodate ground nesting birds. Dick had a question about Milkweed and if it had returned, it had been there previously but had been crowded out. Mike said that there are several cutting strategies for Milkweed to encourage growth for Monarch Butterflies earlier in the season or later in season for birds. Brian noted that other properties in town have a mix of early and late cutting. All agreed that the later mowing date was most beneficial.

Ken gave an update on maintenance work that Jackson Ski Touring(JSTF) has done at Prospect Farm and Boggy Brook. JSTF took an excavator up from the gate to the Hall's Ledge Overlook to restore drainage ditches and water bars. Ken met with Gary Allen to discuss the blown out culvert that crosses the Bog Brook road at the location of the old stump dump gate. Gary said that the town would not repair the culvert since it is on a Class VI road. Ken spoke with Jim Innes from the Forest Service and clarified that the Bog Brook road is a Forest Service road on town Property, similar to the spur road that splits off at the Orchard. Jim gave approval for JSTF to repair the damaged culvert since JSTF has a special use permit with the Forest Service that allows them to maintain the trail/road for recreation. Gary and Jim had culvert material that was used to replace the old damaged section. Ken also spoke to Jim about using fill material from the "Borrow Pit" on Bog Brook to be used for regrading the new parking area. While JSTF had the excavator onsite, they took it down the section of road between Camp Gout and Ballantine Landing to fill the pot holes, remove the large rock and restore the drainage ditches. The trailhead and parking area is on town property and Class VI road and the town cannot fix unless for Life Safety purposes. JSTF has an agreement with the town to improve and maintain its trails and since the ski trail is on the Class VI road is able to make improvements. Ken also took the post from the old stump dump to use for new "Additional Parking" sign

There was a short discussion about where people are parking and if they are utilizing the parking at Ballantine Landing. Ken noticed that many out of state vehicles are parked on the weekends for day use, but there also is parking for overnight trips. Dick mentioned that when abutters want to do work on a Class VI road the usual method would be for the abutter to notify the Select Board, and in the past

work has been done by the town for Life Safety issues, but we do not want to get into a situation such as on Green Hill Rd. and open up the town for liability for maintaining a Class VI for homeowner access. Ken also mentioned that the Town road budget is exhausted for the year and if additional fill material is needed it will need to be paid for from the Baker Fund.

### **Jackson Falls:**

#### No Parking Signs

Gary Speirs installed the cedar posts and Ben installed the new signs. The posts were left long and some fine tuning is still required. The remainder of the posts and signs have been stored in the town garage, holes were also dug on Valley Cross Rd. for installation of signs after bridge replacement. Ken suggested leaving the posts long in case they are damaged by a plow they can be reused. Dick thought to leave them long for the moment to see how visible signs are when there is a snow bank along the road. Brian said he has a electric chainsaw that can be used to trim posts when height is finalized.

#### Fern Plantings

Pam and Ben planted the fern sod and it went very well. Looking at the traffic and use pattern we need to have a more visible way to direct people onto the rocks and along the paths. Pam noticed that dogs seemed to knock down the current wire fencing. Ben said that there are a few areas where stone steps would make it easier to get down to the rocks and keep people off the new planting areas. Ken discussed moving the memorial bench from its current location since it is inaccessible during high flow and the pine trees near it may become a safety issue since the roots cannot be protected with wood chips since it washes out and has a lot of foot traffic.

#### Resident Parking Signs

Ken has been able to find additional sign material but wanted to clarify the language on the sign and what appears on the Town website and language of the ordinance. Brian had a question about the 2 Hour parking time limit and enforcement. There was also a discussion about the remainder of the metal signs and if at some point should they all be replaced to match new signs, and how will the additional signs be paid for.

### **Gray's Inn:**

Nothing to report.

### **Community Garden:**

Water has been shut off for season and lines blown out, people are wrapping up beds and still harvesting.

### **Wildcat River:**

Nothing to Report

## **Conservation Easements:**

### Reminder Letters

Letters have been sent, some properties have been monitored and information on filling reports with SPNHF and updated contact information will be sent to members.

## **Wetlands:**

### Expedited Minimum Impact Wetlands Permit Application; Meloon Rd. R18-L16

We received notice that this permit had been filled with NHDES with a request for comment. Dick asked if it was a new application or the same as reviewed. It appeared to be same application. After discussion it was decided that we would file comment with NHDES that the permit had been reviewed and we declined to approve the permit as designed.

## **New Business:**

### Dundee Community Forest Management Committee Meeting, Dec 4, 2023

Jennifer Pribble, Executive Director of Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, encouraged the Commission to send a member to sit on the management committee. The structure of the committee will be similar to the Pine Hill Community Forest which has representatives from the school (KHS), town of Conway, Tin Mountain and NEMBA. The Dundee Community Forest would have representatives from Jackson and Bartlett Select Boards and Conservation Commissions, Fish and Game, JSTF and others. Ben and Dick wanted to make sure that the commission received a hard copy of the Management plan and Wildlife report and the included maps. Brian wanted to know what the time commitment would be. Jennifer thought it would be an hour once a month. Pam wanted to know how many people would be in the group. Jennifer said around 20, Select Board and Conservation members and large enough to represent a diverse group of users. Ken wanted to know if there would be a staff person managing the group. Jennifer said yes. Ben indicated that we would need to change the date of our next meeting in order to attend. Mike indicated he would be attending as the Tin Mountain representative and would like someone else from the commission to represent the town. Jennifer stated that the meeting would be recorded for any members who are unable to attend. Members discussed when the December meeting would be rescheduled.

### Culvert Modernization Project FEMA/BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) Grant

The commission has been asked to sign onto a letter to support the Financial Strategy Feasibility Planning Process for region wide culvert replacement and does not require any additional funding from the town.

**Dick made a motion to support the project, seconded by Mike. All approved.**

### NHDES Wetlands Rules Update

1. Mitigation hierarchy removal. Permit applicants are not required to prove there are no local mitigation options before opting for in-lieu fee option.
2. Greater Wetlands Permit by Notification (PBN) form accessibility and ease of use. The form has been shortened from ten (printed) pages down to seven.
3. The PBN form also includes three new project categories:
  - Temporary tier 1 or tier 2 stream crossings (one only) impacting less than 50 linear feet of stream channel.
  - Minimum impact, single lot, residential driveways (one only).
  - Minimum impact pond maintenance.

NHDES will review wetlands Permit By Notification (PBN) applications within 10 calendar days (Env-Wt 309.08(a)), with two exceptions:

1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a signed written waiver of intervention from their conservation commission. If they do not, assigned staff will review PBN applications within 25 days.
2. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include a signed written waiver of intervention from their river management advisory committee, if applicable. If they do not, assigned staff will review PBN applications within 25 days.

#### JSTF and USVLT removing invasive plants at Old Pinkham Farm

Ben spoke with Steve Frackleton of the Bartlett Conservation Commission who was working with JSTF and USVLT to remove Bittersweet from the apple trees at the Old Pinkham Farm Easement which is most of the Wave trail area, orchard, fire pond and beaver pond. They are having volunteers come on Thursdays and work on cutting off the invasive vines. Ken said they are cutting it off but the stumps need to be chemically treated to keep it from growing back. Ken said that in this case it would be a topical treatment which has a much lower dose and dispersal as opposed to foliar spraying such as used with Knotweed control. Dick wanted to make sure we are looking to various funding sources for invasive control and working with eligible non profits to take advantage of all sources of funding. Ben wanted to let Commission members to know that the NHACC just held its annual meeting and they discussed some ideas for funding conservation bonds.

#### Ball Fields Dugout

Mike wanted let everyone know that the dugout building at the ball fields had been vandalized inside and the sink had been smashed.

#### Year End Report and Goals

Ben asked members to think about goals for next year such as invasive plant management, Wildcat River water quality testing and a management plan for Jackson Falls. Ken had a question for Jennifer Pribble about a parcel that was held back from the Dundee Community Forest that may have been taken out of current use. Jennifer was not sure but would look into it. Ken indicated that the funds that would be paid for taking the property out of current use would be split between the town and the

conservation commission and could be used for a future acquisition of the Lyons property to expand Prospect Farm. Brian indicated he would reach out and continue the discussion with the property owner.

**Public Comment:**

There were no additional comments.

**Brian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dick Seconded. All approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Ben Halcyon

**To view the full video recording of this meeting visit [www.jacksonflicks.com/Jackson](http://www.jacksonflicks.com/Jackson)**