

Town of Jackson
Conservation Commission Minutes
Regular Meeting
February 7, 2022 - 5:30PM
(Unofficial Until Approved)

Present: Jeff Sires, Chair; Ken Kimball, Pam Smillie, Ben Halcyon, Brian Byrne, Mike Dufilho, Tom Seidel, and Alternate Dick Bennett.

Attendees: Videographer Hank Benesh.

Chairman Sires called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes:

January 3, 2022 Meeting Minutes - **Ken Kimball made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ben Halcyon. All approved.**

Prospect Farm:

General Stewardship Plan

Chairman Sires did not see the General Stewardship Plan on the list of Warrant Articles that the Selectmen reviewed at their last meeting. He is going to talk to Julie to make sure that it will be on the Town Warrant. Ken will be able to attend the Town Meeting in case there are any questions about the proposed Plan.

Hall's Ledge Sign

Tom Seidel has a replacement sign for Hall's Ledge. This sign includes the name. Previously there was only an arrow on the sign.

Jackson Falls:

Path Material

Chairman Sires is keeping this item on the agenda as a reminder. Ben discussed potential pricing for the path material. The pricing is similar (between five and seven hundred dollars), and covers the path from the parking lot to the picnic table. The material for the path works better when the underlying surface area is prepared. Ken is also going to follow up on replacing the No Parking signs.

Kiosks

Chairman Sires has a meeting with a contractor tomorrow to discuss the kiosk. Ken mentioned that everyone needs to keep an eye on costs for the Falls because the Fund (Wentworth Wildcat Fund) has to keep a ten to twelve thousand dollar base in it. Chairman Sires will check on the money in this account.

There was discussion about adjusting the porta-potty to allow for easier handicapped access. Dick mentioned that noise from the door had previously been an issue. Pam said she believed that this had been addressed so that the door no longer slams closed. There was clarification on the handicapped parking at the porta-potty. It would only be short term parking for use of the porta-potty.

Gray's Inn Community Garden:

Dick Bennett had a few questions about setting up the Community Garden. Chairman Sires explained that the plan is to set up the garden beds/plots (rather than having community members do that) with some help from the Town and the use of their equipment. Dick said he did not think that the soil in that area would be conducive to growing root vegetables. Chairman Sires did include new soil in the budget plans. If the grant does not get approved, Chairman Sires said they can research other funding options. He will be attending a meeting for the grant next week, and feels that a decision could be made a few days later. Ken would like to have a plan for the Garden and how the plots will be given to the people who are interested in the Garden. Chairman Sires said that there were a few people who have already expressed interest, so he suggested that the remaining plots that are available could be on a first come first serve basis.

Brian asked for clarification on whether the Conservation Commission would be running the Garden or just facilitating the set up and another group would be managing it. Brian heard some pushback about the Garden and was not sure where to direct the complaints. After some discussion, Chairman Sires said that the last time he spoke to the Selectmen, it was decided that if the grant were approved, he would speak to them again to discuss the Garden in more detail. The thought is that the Selectmen, Library, and some members of the Commission could help finalize the set up process, and eventually either an ad-hoc committee or Garden members could manage the Garden after that. The Commission will continue to advise the Selectmen and others involved regarding the use of that land, but will not be involved in daily maintenance activities, such as pest control.

Mike suggested drafting a one page document outlining some of the operational plans for the Garden to help prepare for possible questions from the Pequawket Foundation regarding the grant. Brian thought that this draft would also be helpful when questions come up from townspeople.

Ken compared the development to that of an association, where the commission would draft the initial bylaws, and as new members joined the association, they could alter those bylaws.

Mike said the process could be broken into phases. The first phase would be the infrastructure development, and the second phase would be operations and guidelines.

Ben followed up by saying this is a Community Garden not a Conservation Commission Garden.

Wildcat River:

Tin Mountain Wild & Scenic Grant Update

Mike, working with Tin Mountain and Jackson Ski Touring have organized a field trip with the JGS 5th and 6th grade students to the orchard at Prospect Farm. They will ski back and forth to the area and learn how to trim the trees. This can count as work toward the grant because the location is in a river basin. Mike will work with the teacher to see how to make the connection between the watershed and the orchard. Mike asked Dick if he would be available to join the field trip and help teach about the

trimming process. The field trip is scheduled for Friday, March 11th. Brian said that he is also able to volunteer. Mike is also planning a hut trip in May.

Conservation Easements:

Nothing to report.

Wetlands:**NHDOT Culvert Replacement, Black Mountain Road**

DOT sent a letter to let the Town know that they would be replacing a culvert this summer. They are asking if there are any mitigation priorities. Chairman Sires said that he does not believe that this project, since it is small, would run into the need for wetlands compensatory mitigation, but that will not be determined until the permitting process has been completed. Ken was not able to determine if the aquatic organism passage would be an issue. He mentioned trout in that area, so DOT would need to address that issue to make sure the culvert did not pose a problem. Chairman Sires did say the Commission should be able to review the wetlands permit when submitted, and verify what is on the plans.

New Business:**Bench Donation**

The Town asked the Conservation Commission for input on an offer from the Conway Area Lions Club to donate a recycled bench. In the past, there was a moratorium placed on memorial benches in town, but this bench is not a memorial bench. Ken suggested contacting the Friends of the Library to see if they had any interest in a bench for use behind the library. Dick mentioned that the school could be interested and it would also teach the kids about recycling.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Brian Byrne made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mike Dufilho. All approved.

Respectfully submitted by Erik Atwell

To view the full video recording of this meeting visit www.jacksonflicks.com/Jackson