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Town of Grantham Grantham Conservation Commission

MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2016

Chairman Richard Hocker called the Grantham Conservation Commission to order on Monday, August 15, 2016 at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Richard Hocker, Dennis Ryan, Rich Kaszeta, John Larrabee, David Wood, Laura Nagy, Susan Buchanan

Meeting minutes: Nikki Arsenault

Absent:

Members of the Public:

ADMINISTRATIVE

Approval of Minutes for the July 18, 2016 Meeting

Chairman Hocker asked if there were any additions, corrections, or modifications to the draft meeting minutes for the June 20, 2016 meeting.

Buchanan announced that on page three there should be a grammatical change from “effects” to “affect”. Ryan added that on page three “Weisman” should be changed to “Eastman”. On page three, the section regarding the road fill should indicate that the Town / Road Agent will need to be reimbursement. Wood added that in the second paragraph on the second page, the sign should indicate that the funding was from the Byrne Foundation and the Town of Grantham; this statement regarding funding should not include “volunteers”. Also on page two, Wood’s reimbursement should reflect being for signage previously approved and building materials. The sentence regarding the dues payment to the Upper Valley Land Trust sentence will also need to be updated. Finally, “have been removed from the site” will need to be updated in the section about residual lumber pieces. Nagy noted that in the first page paragraph on page two, “updated” should be changed to “update”. Ryan noted that under “Administrative”, “as amended” can be removed, as there were no changes to the last set of meeting minutes.

There being no additional changes or additions to the minutes, Chairman Hocker noted that he would entertain a motion to approve the July 18, 2016 minutes.

A motion was made by Kaszeta to approve the July 18, 2016 minutes as amended by the Commission; second by Buchanan. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.

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Unanimously Approved & Accepted

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Hocker noted that for some time he has been looking for a successor as Chairman to the Commission. He is bringing the succession to the issue because he believes that his expertise would best be used in the areas of projects and historical knowledge; therefore, he would like to step down as Chairman. He invited anyone who is interested to step forward for consideration. He noted that upcoming responsibilities would include the budget for the coming year, the annual report, and the Flewelling walk-about. Hocker added that he will likely seek to stay on the Commission for another term. Wood noted that he has found someone to take his place on Woodlands and Wildlife; therefore, he would be willing to step forward for this position.

Nagy made a motion to elect Wood as Chairman of the Commission.

Buchanan seconded the motion.

Unanimously Approved & Accepted

Hocker added that it would be a good idea to create the position of Vice Chair for the Commission. He suggest that while the Commission does not need to act on this tonight, it would be desirable to put this into effect. Wood questioned in which situations this position would be valuable, and Hocker noted that there are often tasks put forth by the Selectman and the Town Administrator where a Vice Chair could be valuable. As an example, Hocker noted that there have been goldfish located in the stream at Brookside Park. These goldfish are now currently located in the fire pond next to Town Hall. Larrabee questioned how many incidents like this take place where the Commission and/or the Commission's Chair would be involved. Hocker noted that there are approximately 6-8 per year and can include unpaid taxes issues.

Wood noted that he and Nagy have been currently working on the cutting applications, and it would be helpful for him to no longer have this responsibility. Specifically, that it would be important to have someone step up to assist Nagy with this process. Buchanan noted that she has a full plate and would prefer not to take on this responsibility at the moment. Larrabee noted that he would be willing to help in this capacity.

Capital Expenditure – Hocker noted that he would entertain comments regarding the capital expenditures list which he provided to the Commission. He has submitted several requests for funding to purchase property, which were not approved. Following a question from Wood, Hocker noted that a capital expenditure could be anything from a building to a vehicle. In order for the Town to assess impact fees, this Capital Improvement Committee must exist. Money has already been allocated for the footbridge; Wood noted that dam/beach cleanup should also be on the calendar of projects. With regard to the Flewelling property, Hocker noted that it would be helpful to have a buyer who is at least marginally interested in working with the Commission to get the property cleaned up.

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Buchanan mentioned that there is some work that could be done that could be added as “wish list” items. In addition to the Miller Pond dam, trail improvements and bridges at GVS could be added to this list, if possible. Wood clarified that he was pretty sure that the GVCS was not requesting funding, but rather support. Larrabee added that even if it was a small amount of labor/material, it would be a good thing to be involved in. Buchanan added that she spoke with Karen Eylander at GVS, and Eylander had the chance to walk the property and was able to identify the number of bridges and crossings that will need improvement. Eylander is aiming for a trail work day and will send out a Doodle poll to request volunteers for the beginning stages of the project. As far as a trail work day is concerned, a September date is being considered to include GVS families.

OTHER BUSINESS

Brookside Park:

Trail Activities – While not related to Brookside Park, Wood noted that with regard to the Upper Valley Trails Alliance, Ryan has agreed to be one of the members available for training to put the description of trails onto the website. Eastman is providing 75% of the cost (\$260). Wood requested a motion to approve the remaining 25% (\$90) to paying for this training.

Buchanan moved to approve \$90 for the Upper Valley Trails Alliance GPS data entry training. Larrabee seconded the motion.

Unanimously Approved & Accepted

Hocker added for the record that this money will be allocated from the General Fund.

Bridge Construction – Kaszeta announced that most of the salvageable materials are back with Brandon; all additional salvageable wood is in storage in his shed for future use. The 10’x10’ board is still there at the site. Overall, things are in order at the site for the ribbon cutting.

Hocker announced that he would like a picnic table installed at the viewing area. Larrabee provided an example of an all wood table that would cost approximately \$275. This will be a good project for the kids to construct.

Hocker noted that he would entertain a motion to approve the expenditure of \$275 for the materials for this ADA-compliant picnic table.

Nagy made a motion to approve the \$275 for this purpose, and Ryan seconded the motion.

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Ribbon cutting – Nagy provided a draft of a poster for the August 27th ribbon cutting event at Brookside Park. Buchanan noted that it would be a good idea to have a photo of the bridge and Larrabee added

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that perhaps it would be good to have the colors be maroon and gold to match the GVS colors. Nagy noted that it would be nice to bring a plan drawing of the bridge in addition to the poster of the bridge building as well as maps and the animal skulls for the children to look at. The Commission members agreed to bring tables to the event for displaying these items. It was agreed that the event will take place rain or shine; Nagy agreed to be the Master of Ceremonies.

Buchanan added that it would be nice for Kimball to make some comments at the ceremony itself. Kaszeta noted that he would be willing to make some comments about the bridge design, and Hocker agreed to share a few works as well. Buchanan added that it would be appropriate for the Town Administrator to say a few words if she were willing to do so.

Hocker noted that there is a portable grill available for food (hot dogs, chips, etc). After some discussion, the Commission agreed that hikes could take place at 12:00 and 1:00 p.m. Wood agreed to lead the hikes and Hocker agreed to stay to answer questions, etc. Hocker added that his wife may be willing to take photographs for the day. Nagy noted that she would type up the list of tasks and associated volunteers and send this out to the Commission. Hocker noted that he would talk to the Police Chief regarding parking for the event. Parking and shuttling for the Commission members' vehicles will also save some parking space. Following a question from Buchanan, it was noted that the cost of food, drinks, and paper goods will be covered by the Commission. It was decided after a good deal of discussion that the Commission would plan for an attendance of 75-100. It was further decided that the photo would take place just after 11:00 a.m.

Wood asked the group is there was anyone on the list of volunteers that he may have forgotten. He will send a follow-up to the group of volunteers to make sure that they are there for the photo if they would like to be. Buchanan added that she would also invite Heather Cantagallo, Jacqui Guillette, and the Eylanders.

Cost Elements – Hocker confirmed that the Commission members have received their reimbursements. He added that he would speak with Melissa regarding the \$900 shortfall from the general fund. Regarding the cost spreadsheet updates provided by Hocker, Buchanan questioned the deficits appearing on the spreadsheet, and Hocker replied that she could look under the Byrne Fund section for a full detail. The Town Forest monies are derived specifically from activities in the Town Forest (i.e. timber). Hocker added that additional monies should come from the lumbering of the Smith lot in the Fall. Wood questioned where the money would be use from these sources, and Hocker replied that the money would have to be used in the Town Forest (trails, trees, bridges, etc.). As far as paying Jeremy Turner, Hocker noted that the Forester will schedule the “front end” of the work, a logger will then be hired for the remaining work, and Turner would take his commission from the sale. GCC will then receive a stumpage fee; pricing varies with regard to this. Buchanan asked if there would be a net gain and Hocker confirmed that this would be correct and that barring a unique situation, that there would be no expense. Turner has not yet gotten back to Hocker regarding the Smith lot or the Chestnut tree information. Wood posed a question regarding the design of the logging roads to best facilitate the

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installation of trails subsequent to the logging operation. It was agreed that Turner should present his plan to the Commission for review again prior to initiating the operation.

Town Trail Maps – Discussed above (Wood and Ryan to attend training).

OTHER BOARD ACTIVITIES

Geocaching for Brookside – Hocker announced that there has been a request to add a geocache to the Park. Kaszeta noticed that this is already in place at the west end of the bridge. Wood noted that he would report back that one is currently there, and that the Commission approves of this activity taking place at the Park.

Miller Pond Bridge update – Hocker announced that the bridge construction is in full progress. When it is completed, there should be at least a 50 ton weight limit. Hocker noted that the contract calls for completion by the end of September.

Butternut property sale – There is now a guide available for what is required for the Chestnut grove project. The next step will be to obtain some cost information regarding what it will take to complete this project. Hocker added that Fish and Game has noted that this could be a difficult year for wildlife; the proposed project could be very good for the wildlife diet. It will take approximately 7-10 years for this to mature.

Plaque – Chairman Hocker noted that he would put an order in for the plaque; a bronze plaque with engraved letters (200), 12”x12” engraved will be in the neighborhood of \$200. The plaque will likely need to be mounted facing the walkway. Kaszeta noted that the plaque could be posted between the two posts at the foot of the bridge.

HANDOUTS / ACTIVITIES

Town of Grantham Treasurer’s Report provided by Chairman Hocker.

Cost spreadsheet provided by Chairman Hocker.

Byrne account expenditures statement detail provided by Chairman Hocker.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hocker asked if there was any further business. There being none, Larrabee moved to adjourn the meeting and Wood seconded the motion.

The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:55p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Grantham Conservation Commission will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room on Monday, September 19, 2016.

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Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Arsenault

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