

# Grantham Conservation Commission

## MINUTES

OCTOBER 2, 2017

300 ROUTE 10 SOUTH, GRANTHAM, NH

<b>MEETING CALLED BY</b>	Chairman David Wood
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	Regular Meeting of the Conservation Commission
<b>FACILITATOR</b>	Chairman David Wood
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Nikki Arsenault – from recording
<b>COMMISSION MEMBERS</b>	Chairman David Wood, Rich Kaszeta, Richard Hocker, Dennis Ryan, Sue Buchanan, Laura Nagy
<b>ABSENT</b>	John Larrabee
<b>OTHER VISITORS</b>	Jeremy Turner and Laura French

Chairman David Wood called the Grantham Conservation Commission to order on Monday, October 2, 2017 at 7:02 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.

### APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 MEETING

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Wood asked if there were any additions, corrections, or modification to the draft meeting minutes for the September 18, 2017 meeting.		
The following corrections were suggested:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nagy – page 2 under ‘Old Business’ – Under Discussion, change to “to the top of Little Mount Washington”</li> <li>• Kaszeta – top of page 3, correct the spelling to “Leavitt Hill Road”</li> <li>• Buchanan – bottom of page 1, remove extra space; then on the third line down hyphenate “disease resistant”</li> </ul>		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
There being no additional changes to the minutes, Wood announced that he would entertain a motion to approve the September, 2017.		
A motion was made by Ryan to approve the September 18, 2017 minutes; second by Nagy. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.		
<b>Unanimously Approved &amp; Accepted</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>		
Meeting minutes for this meeting will be completed within five business days.	PERSON RESPONSIBLE Nikki Arsenault	DEADLINE 10/09/2017

### OLD BUSINESS – TOWN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN – LAURA FRENCH

<b>DISCUSSION</b>
Chair Wood introduced Laura French to the GCC members. Wood noted that the GCC is tasked with overseeing just one of the Town-owned properties (lot 10) and that the easement on that lot requires that a forest management plan be completed every ten years; however, based upon the small difference in pricing, the GCC decided to have a 2007 plan updated for the entire property. French noted that it was decided that, because the forest had experienced no major alterations in the last decade, they would do an intensive field review and then update the plan without creating new inventory data; she added that the next (2027) forest management plan should include a new timber inventory. She added that her belief is that observations are much more meaningful than numbers in this case, given the characteristics of the piece of land.

French distributed maps to the group and announced that the majority of the information in the 2007 Plan is still valid. Timber quality is poor to fair. The impact of moose browse is significant in this area, although the tick population will likely reduce browse in the future. What has changed in the past ten years is the way of thinking about land, i.e. the practice of silviculture and the practice of forestry. Given the shallow soils and poor condition of the forest overall, French believes this is more of an “all or nothing” scenario in which she recommends improving select areas and then letting other areas rest and grow. The yellow circles on the map indicate where French recommends early successional cuts, otherwise known as structured clear cuts. Early successional habitat is a very important element of wildlife habitat. There is very little early successional shrubby habitat on this land. French further noted that these areas are recommended because they offer the best chance of success. The total amount of land to be clear cut amounts to 54 acres or about 1/8 of the Town Forest area. If a similar fraction of the forest were clear cut every 15 years, in the end the oldest patch of trees would be 120 years old and the forest would contain a successional series of 8 different age classes. The resulting mixed aged forest would provide a much richer habitat for wildlife than the alternative of a late successional forest in which the youngest portion would be at least 140 years old.

Buchanan asked French if there is any advantage in harvesting the 54 acres over several years. French replied that there are pros and cons to every decision in this Plan but the downside is in the economy of scale and the uncertainty of the timber market. Wood asked whether there is an advantage in waiting in hopes that the timber market will improve. Turner noted that the biggest risks are the availability of people to do the work and the unpredictable nature of the winter season. He suggested starting with the areas to the north but being prepared to do the whole project if weather conditions are favorable. Wood questioned if it might be better to get some of the more difficult spots done now and save the easier spots for later. Turner replied that operability is the primary factor in harvesting; the project as proposed has two landing sites which could facilitate the project being completed in two parts. French added that some areas are the easiest to get to because they are roadside, and they are also the most favorable in terms of early successional forest and their ability to regenerate. Turner noted that it is of primary importance to keep resource impact in mind. French said that another option is to map out all potential sites and then act based upon the best combination of the factors noted above. Following a question from Wood, Turner noted that this project is not likely to cost the Town anything and hopefully would generate some income. Buchanan questioned whether snowmobile use would be curtailed during the harvest, and Turner responded that he works closely with the NH Bureau of Trails and this is a major north/south corridor so it will be a matter of coordinating with both the Bureau and the local club(s) to cover any safety issues. Turner further recommended diverting traffic across other trails.

Hocker added that the terrain on the southern end of the project could be very difficult and would require careful implementation. Turner agreed and noted that the work completed would be held to a high standard given that this is a Town property. Wood asked what happens to the slash in these areas, and Turner replied that it would be chipped.

<b>CONCLUSION</b>	GCC members noted their support of this draft of the Plan and that they wish to have the plan fully developed so that the Town can move forward with this project. The plan will likely be implemented in the winter of 2018-2019.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Finalize the Plan and then come to GCC for final approval.	Laura French	

**OLD BUSINESS – FORESTRY PLANS FOR SMITH LOT – JEREMY TURNER**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Turner expects that logging on the Smith Lot would be completed this winter, implementing the Forest Management Plan that had been approved, but not implemented, last year.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
Turner noted that the contracts for the Smith Lot are good through March of 2018.		
	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

**OLD BUSINESS – GCC MEETING DATE – WOOD**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Wood noted that Nikki Arsenault is not available on the first Monday of the month. The Commission members agreed to finish out the year meeting on the first Monday of the month, and change the meeting date to the fourth Monday of the month at the beginning of the new year. Wood made a motion to this effect, and Buchanan seconded the motion; all in favor.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

**OLD BUSINESS – SHORELINE CUTTING APPLICATIONS – NAGY**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
An application was received that may be questionable with regard to RSA 483. Nagy noted that she was in communication with the applicant, Leslie Moses in Eastman, who has filed her cutting application with the Town Office. Nagy has not yet received this application but will follow up with Martha. The request is to remove a failing evergreen at Eastman's South Cove and replace it with an elm. After discussion, the commission agreed that the proposal appears to be approvable. Nagy further noted that the proposal is to delay any planting until after the frost (end of October).		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

OLD BUSINESS – HANDICAP SIGNAGE AT BROOKSIDE PARK – KASZETA

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Kaszeta produced the sign announcing the handicapped-accessible trail, and Wood agreed to put the sign on the pole and place it at the Brookside Park. The sign will be placed between the stream and the trail facing the parking area. Kaszeta announced that he is requesting reimbursement in the amount of \$28.45 and that he will send his receipt to Melissa White. Members approved the expenditure of these funds to reimburse Kaszeta for the expenses associated with producing the sign.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

OLD BUSINESS – HUNT FOR GRANTHAM HISTORY – KASZETA / NAGY

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Kaszeta noted that he sent an email to Commission members earlier in the day outlining approximately 25 items that might be included in the scavenger hunt. Wood asked if there was a way to include the middle school kids. Buchanan recommended creating a flyer to send to the schools. Nagy suggested doing the event in tandem with Old Home Day. The group will work to finalize the ideas for prizes.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Follow up with GVS, middle school and Town Administrator regarding the Hunt.	Buchanan	ASAP

OLD BUSINESS – HIKE TO LITTLE MOUNT WASHINGTON

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Wood reminded the group that this coming Saturday is the hike to Little Mount Washington.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

NEW BUSINESS – BUDGET – WOOD

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Wood provided an overview of the budget items for 2018. Hocker noted that the Chestnut trees will be \$30/tree. This could come out of the Town Forest funds or current use funds. Wood questioned when the Commission members would like to plant the trees, and Hocker replied that it would depend on the progress/completion of the project at the Smith lot. Wood noted that this will be planned		

for the Spring. Wood noted that he would like to add some money for prizes for the proposed scavenger hunt; members agreed to "add back" the money allocated for the 250<sup>th</sup>.

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Submit GCC budget to Town Hall	Wood	10/20/2017

**NEW BUSINESS – NHACC CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> 9-3:30PM – WOOD**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Wood asked if anyone was interested in attending the NHACC conference. Kaszeta will attend and Buchanan and Nagy may also attend. Wood noted that he is already signed up to attend.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
None at this time.		

**OLD BUSINESS – STATUS OF THE HASTINGS LOT – WOOD / HOCKER**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
The availability of a lot on Leavitt Hill Rd owned was discussed. Although the GCC had approved limited funds to commission an appraisal of the lot, the cost of an appraisal exceeded that limit. After some discussion, the commission agreed to move forward without an appraisal and authorize Hocker to approach the seller with an offer.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Discuss offer with seller.	Hocker	ASAP

**ADJOURNMENT**

Wood asked if there was any further business. There being none, Kaszeta moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. and Hocker seconded the motion.

***The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.***

**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, November 6, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Nikki Arsenault