

Grantham Conservation Commission

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 21, 2016

300 ROUTE 10 SOUTH, GRANTHAM, NH

MEETING CALLED BY	Chairman David Wood
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular Meeting of the Conservation Commission
FACILITATOR	Richard Hocker
NOTE TAKER	Nikki Arsenault
BOARD ATTENDEES	Richard Hocker, Rich Kaszeta, Dennis Ryan, Laura Nagy, Sue Buchanan, John Larrabee
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR OTHER BOARDS & COMMITTEES	Selectman Sheridan Brown

Richard Hocker called the Grantham Conservation Commission to order on Monday, November 21, 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.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 17, 2016 MEETING

DISCUSSION		
Hocker asked if there were any additions, corrections, or modification to the draft meeting minutes for the October 17, 2016 meeting. Nagy and Buchanan suggested grammatical and content changes on pages 2 and 3 of the minutes, which are now reflected in the approved version of the October 17, 2016 meeting minutes.		
CONCLUSIONS		
There being no additional changes or additions to the minutes, Hocker noted that he would entertain a motion to accept the October 17, 2016 minutes as amended.		
A motion was made by Nagy to approve the October 17, 2016 minutes as amended by the Commission; second by Kaszeta. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.		
Unanimously Approved & Accepted		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Meeting minutes for the October 17, 2016 meeting will be updated as noted above; the minutes for this meeting will be completed within five business days.	Nikki Arsenault	11/29/2016

OLD BUSINESS – 250TH CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION		
Ryan and Brown provided updates regarding the Grantham 250 th Celebration planning. Ryan noted that he attended the October 27 th meeting of the 250 th Celebration Committee and was impressed with the number of very good ideas for potential events. Brown noted that they could use more workers/assistance on this project planning. Brown noted his appreciation for the GCC's efforts thus far. He is hoping that the activities scheduled for this celebration will encourage open space appreciation in Grantham and also give people the opportunity to visit areas of town that they may not normally visit. He also noted that he has placed a draft calendar of events online for the Commission to review.		
Potential ways for GCC to get involved:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• September 16, 2017 – Hawk Watch and Foliage Hike at Little Mount Washington – noted parking limitations• October 14, 2017 – Hawktober Fest and Birds of Prey show (options – Tom Richardi (Conway, MA), VINS, or Audubon)• February 17, 2018 – Old Time Log Cutting at Town Forest or Smith Lot (Jeremy Turner?)• Snowshoe hikes and/or skiing		

APPROVED

- Nagy – Skating party at Miller Pond or the recreation park – recreation park is likely more accessible; Stocker Pond may also be an option.
- Buchanan noted that GCC may also want to affiliate with the youth fishing derby or the cross country skiing event.
- Ryan suggested a cemetery walk to find old gravestones, potentially one that is 250 years old. Hocker added that the Historical Society would be a good contact for this.
- Dragonfly Walk – Buchanan questioned if anyone has claimed ownership of this event and Brown replied that he would circle back to check on this. Nagy suggested Pam Hunt at the New Hampshire Audubon Society as a potential person for the dragonfly talk.

CONCLUSIONS

The plans and discussion for this topic will continue over the coming months as plans are developed and finalized.

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

DEADLINE

Develop a timeline of events that GCC will host/sponsor/plan

GCC

May 2016

Determine status of planning for the Dragonfly Walk

Brown

ASAP

OLD BUSINESS – STATUS OF SMITH LOT – JEREMY TURNER

DISCUSSION

Smith lot logging – Hocker announced that he sent Jeremy Turner an email and Turner has consulted with one logging crew. They determined that the I-89 overpass is too low to accommodate their logging truck. Turner will check with another crew and get back to Hocker. This item will remain on the agenda for next month.

CONCLUSIONS

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

DEADLINE

Hocker will circle back around with Turner regarding this project.

Hocker

December mtg

OLD BUSINESS – MILLER POND DAM INSPECTION

DISCUSSION

The Miller Pond dam was inspected by Charles Krautmann on October 21, 2016; both Ryan and Wood were in attendance. Ryan, having been present at the inspection, noted that the dam is currently “non-hazardous” and does not require inspections, or inspections at a very low frequency. It is possible that it could be upgraded to “low hazard”. If this were to happen, there will be a \$400 fee for inspections every 6 years; worst case scenario – concrete fixes to the dam could amount to \$50k-100k in repairs. The inspector measured and received a measurement of 6 feet and 1 inch. Over 6 feet is considered hazardous. One way to remedy the situation is to remove the top layer of stones to decrease this measurement; the inspector will prepare a written report by the spring thaw. Hocker noted that there is a lot of garbage collected around the dam and this is of some concern. The property owner would have to give access to the road and the dam in order to clean this up. This would help to clean up the flow patterns of the water. Follow-up – Brown with landowner for a spring or summer clean-up, preferably summer. Buchanan echoed some of the discussion from the last meeting for Brown’s benefit with regard to an official survey of the property in question; Wood will be following up on this matter. Discussion ensued regarding this topic and it was decided that Brown and Wood would follow up on this item.

CONCLUSIONS

ACTION ITEMS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

DEADLINE

Follow-up with landowner for a potential spring/summer clean-up.

Brown

ASAP

OLD BUSINESS – SHORLINE CUTTING APPLICATIONS

APPROVED

DISCUSSION		
Nagy noted that there was only one shoreline cutting application received last month which was submitted by Granite Way.		
CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
None at this time.		

NEW BUSINESS – REPORT OF NHACC ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 12, 2016

DISCUSSION		
<p>Ryan announced that his notes from the plenary address and lectures were sent to the Commission via email. Hocker asked if Wood's notes should be included as part of the official minutes and Commission members agreed that it was not necessary at this time. Ryan added that there was a presentation by Tom Wessells; he mentioned the emerald ash plague. He believes that there is a single stand of American Chestnut trees in NH that are somewhat resistant to the Chestnut blight. Hocker then showed printouts from the Chestnut Hill tree company; in 30 years they have not had a tree that was killed by the blight. Hocker and Wood had a discussion and this issue will likely be revisited in December. They would charge approximately \$30/tree for 30 trees. Hocker will do more research before presenting further on this topic. This may also create a possible item for the 250th events as well (sponsorship and/or dedication of trees).</p> <p>At this point, Buchanan asked to revisit the topic of the Flewelling property; she wondered after reviewing past GCC minutes how the boundary line and/or access route could be confirmed – was the easement ever amended; Hocker confirmed that the access road never changed.</p>		
CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Obtain additional information about the ordering of trees.	Hocker	ASAP

NEW BUSINESS – APPROVAL OF NHACC ATTENDANCE

DISCUSSION		
<p>Amounts needing reimbursement - \$55 to Ryan, \$55 to Wood.</p> <p>Hocker asked for a motion to reimburse Ryan and Wood in the amount of \$55 each, with the money coming from the appropriated Commission funding.</p>		
CONCLUSIONS		
<p>A motion was made by Nagy to approve the reimbursement of Ryan and Wood in the amount of \$110 (\$55 each); seconded by Buchanan. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.</p> <p>Unanimously Approved & Accepted</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
None at this time.		

APPROVED

NEW BUSINESS – SUPPORT ON WETLAND BUFFER REGULATIONS – NHACC QUESTIONNAIRE

DISCUSSION		
<p>Hocker noted that there is a proposed revision to the law being put forth with regard to Wetland Buffer regulations. The proposed change is to 100 ft. Hocker added that waterways and ponds (the only items with defined setbacks) currently have a setback of 75ft.</p> <p>Larrabee noted that in Maine the following limits have been set: 250ft for oceanfront, lakes, ponds, and wetlands; streams are set at 75ft (except for seasonal). He believes this is where NH should have its setbacks. Hocker added that all ponds in the town of Grantham are covered by the Shoreland Protection Act, which gives the State control up to the 250ft. water mark. He continued that Skinner Brook, the north branch of the Sugar River and Sawyer Brook are all declared fourth order streams (again, up to 250ft.) Nothing closer than 75ft. can be built. Wetlands is a slightly different issue; the Town defers to State regulations on this (50ft.) Larrabee questioned why there has been push back on this topic and Buchanan noted that all of these types of bodies of water are covered under the EPA. Hocker noted that the logic as he understands it is that this decision allowed DES to be the arbiter for wetlands (50ft. setback). Larrabee added that he believed that there should be a uniform 250ft. Ryan noted that they are looking specifically for input regarding the setback of 100ft. Hocker asked if the Commission would like to respond to this survey; after some discussion it was agreed that the Commission is in favor of increasing setbacks.</p>		
CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Hocker to fill out the questionnaire and submit on behalf of the GCC	Hocker	11/23/2016

NEW BUSINESS – HUNTING IN BROOKSIDE PARK

DISCUSSION		
<p>Kaszeta noted that he has received reports of people in Brookside Park prepping for hunting and people hunting on the land behind Grantham Village School. Discussion ensued regarding re-signing the safe zone behind GVS and agreed that this was likely a topic that the GPTG could address. Larrabee asked what the federal setback is for this type of activity; Buchanan noted that there is a State statute that bans firearm hunting in public parks; it may be a good idea to post a sign to this effect.</p> <p>Hocker asked if there was a motion for him to approach the Selectmen and ask that they outlaw hunting in Brookside Park.</p>		
CONCLUSIONS		
<p>A motion was made by Larrabee to approve Hocker approaching the Selectmen on behalf of the GCC to ask that they outlaw hunting in Brookside Park; seconded Nagy. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.</p> <p>Unanimously Approved & Accepted</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Hocker to send a formal letter to the Board of Selectman	Hocker	ASAP

NEW BUSINESS – CO-SPONSORSHIP PRESENTATION ON EMERALD ASH BORER

DISCUSSION		
<p>Hocker noted that the Sustainability Committee has asked if the GCC would like to co-sponsor the presentation on the Emerald Ash Borer. Nagy provided brief information about this event and Larrabee questioned if this talk would focus specifically on Sullivan County; Nagy confirmed this to be correct. The group agreed that the Emerald/Chestnut/Ash history talk would also fit into the 250th planning as well.</p>		
CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Nagy to follow-up by carrying the GCC's interest to the group	Nagy	ASAP

APPROVED

NEW BUSINESS – OTHER

OTHER	
<p>Larrabee requested reimbursement in the amount of \$129.99 for the previously approved picnic table at Brookside Park.</p> <p>Hocker asked for a motion to reimburse John in the amount of \$129.99 from the current appropriated funds.</p> <p>A motion was made by Ryan to approve the reimbursement of Larrabee in the amount of \$129.99; seconded Kaszeta. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.</p>	
<p>Unanimously Approved & Accepted</p>	
<p>For future agenda item – Kaszeta asked that in the Spring the Commission re-visit the topic of having the Scouts stain the bridge.</p>	

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35p.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, December 19, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,



Nikki Arsenault