

TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes February 9, 2021

L. Spencer called the meeting held via Zoom to order at 4:04PM.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Members Present:

Larry Spencer, Chairman	Anne Packard, Vice Chair	Bill Nesheim	Ben Amsden
Shelagh Connelly	Woodie Laverack, Ex-Officio		

Members Not Present: Brian Gagnon April Sargent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

L. Spencer stated that the minutes of December 8, 2020 stated he had repaired the kiosk roof when he actually added a roof to the structure.

It was noted the minutes would be updated to reflect the kiosk roof was added not repaired.

The minutes of December 8, 2020 were approved as amended.

MAIL CHECK: None

OLD ITEMS:

Survey of the Howe Town Forest and study of the town needs for the DPW parcel:

L. Spencer stated he met with M. Capone/Selectboard regarding the Howe Town Forest property and the Department of Public Works portion of it.

L. Spencer that a committee made up of a Conservation Commission member, the Road Agent some of the Selectboard will meet to review the potential future needs of the Department of Public Works.

B. Nesheim volunteered to serve as the Conservation Commission member on the committee.

L. Spencer stated he still hopes to move forward with the survey before July 2021.

Update on the Oxbow Land and Water Conservation Fund proposal:

L. Spencer reported the State has requested for more information in the following 3 areas:

1. Clarification as to what entity is submitting the proposal. The grant was submitted by the Holderness Conservation Commission, the Plymouth Conservation Commission and the White Mountain Trail Collective. Usually a single entity submits a grant application. It was determined that the Holderness Conservation Commission would be designated as the entity submitting the grant application.
2. Clarification for the perpetuity of properties that are being purchased. Since the Holderness Conservation Commission is the designated submitter of the grant, the Town of Holderness would end up owning all of the properties being purchased: 2 in Plymouth, 2 in Ashland and 1 in Holderness. Plymouth would have easements on the property in Plymouth.
3. Clarification on the Stewardship Plan for the properties involved. A basic stewardship plan will be put together and submitted showing how the management of the properties would be shared between the various groups involved.

L. Spencer stated the Board of Selectmen asked town counsel to review/comment on the grant application with regard to the town owning property in other towns, multiple entities being involved in the grant and the use of town funds.

L. Spencer noted consideration needs to be given to the cost of maintenance of the properties.

L. Spencer stated the agricultural use (mowing of the fields) is to preserve the property and not for production.

S. Connelly stated the farmer mowing the fields may need to be compensated for mowing if the hay cannot be sold.

L. Spencer stated the committee will meet soon as there is a March 1, 2021 deadline to respond to the State.

NEW ITEMS:

Signed permits from December and January:

L. Spencer stated that he had been in to sign one application that was not a major project.

Update on Conservation Matters column in the Record Enterprise:

Anne Packard's column will be in a spring issue (March or April) of the Record Enterprise.

B. Nesheim asked for Anne's column to be sent to the Commission members.

L. Spencer stated he would forward it to the members.

Winter use of properties—Open House:

L. Spencer asked the Committee members if an Open House should be scheduled.

The Commission determined to wait until next year to hold an Open House during the winter months.

Trail signs:

L. Spencer stated the trail signs is an on-going project and will continue working on it.

Important legislative items before the NH House and Senate:

L. Spencer noted a piece of legislation would allow for smaller areas to be designated as prime wetlands.

L. Spencer noted a piece of legislation would allow some prime wetlands along State roads to have the designation of being a prime wetland removed.

L. Spencer noted another piece of legislation would require a septic system assessment be done on waterfront properties with systems more than 20 years old prior to selling the property.

L. Spencer noted a piece of legislation would change the criteria for a town to be able to enter executive session to purchase property.

Update on terms for members:

L. Spencer and B. Amsden indicated their interest in serving on the Conservation Commission for another 3-year term. A. Packard stated she would check in with B. Gagnon as he has not attended the last few meetings.

Other items as needed:

S. Connelly is still working on communicating with the Road Agent regarding Sargent-Smith Road.

L. Spencer stated he will continue to work on the Kiosk sign for the Sargent-Smith property.

L. Spencer stated the National Park Service requested to do sampling on the Pilote Forest for the presence of PFA.

S. Connelly stated it is important that the town own the property being tested.

W. Laverack stated the Board of Selectmen agreed to comply with/look into the request.

S. Connolly stated that she responded to an inquiry on the Swainey Brook Property and indicated that the annual monitoring for the property was done and that no encroachment of the easement was evident – specifically where the parking apron is.

B. Nesheim plans to do the annual monitoring for the White Oak Pond property now that the lake is frozen.

B. Nesheim stated that he met with E. Thatcher, a vice president of the Lakes Region Search & Rescue Team, who stated the search and rescue teams use an app called Cal-Trails which pulls information from Open Street Map.

B. Nesheim stated he will put the Holderness trail information on Open Street Map so it can be accessed by search and rescue teams if necessary.

L. Spencer and B. Nesheim will meet with E. Mardin to update her on the issue.

UP-COMING MEETINGS:

Saving Special Places: Friday April 9, 2021 from 10:00 to Noon and Saturday, April 10, 2021 from 9:00 to Noon.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 4:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Decoteau, Land Use Boards Assistant