

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES, June 13, 2023**

Larry Spencer called the meeting to order at 4:00

Commissioners Present: Larry Spencer, Anne Packard, Woodie Laverack, Bill Nesheim, and Ben Amsden

Not Present: April Sargent, Shelagh Connelly

Also Present: Lucinda Hannus, Land Use Administrator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 9, 2023

**“Motion to approve the minutes as submitted “– Ben Amsden
Second – Bill Nesheim**

Approved: 5- Yes, 0- No

MAIL CHECK: Mr. Spencer reviewed the mail: NHTOA Membership renewal, two NH Forestry Statutory Permit-by-Notification. Ben Amsden made a motion to approve \$50 renewal of membership in NHTOA with a second by W. Laverack, members all voted in favor of motion. B. Nesheim inquired as to notifications of Notice to Cut. Indications from members was that they have not in quite some time. B, Nesheim stated it would be nice if they were made aware of permits so that when questioned they can make informed responses.

OLD ITEMS:

1. Trails – Work still needs to be done clearing and weed whacking. B. Nesheim will reach out to the town’s road agent to use equipment. The open area, the new trail the main trail cut over to the wood lot, over the bridge and the path to the farm road all need clearing.
2. L. Spencer reminded members to monitor and report on their assigned town properties.
3. LWCF grant application. L. Spencer advised the members that the grant application is basically dead, however they have switched gears and are applying to LCHIP for preservation funds. They submitted a letter of intent which was accepted by LCHIP and the full application is due June 22nd. They are using the information they had already gathered from the LWCF grant and members were emailed the purpose and budget information. LCHIP supposedly has approximately \$3.5 million in grant funds available but have already received applications for over \$5 million in requests. They will consider partial funding of projects so this project is not off the table. L. Spencer will continue working with Roger

Larochelle, Executive Director, Squam Lakes Conservation Society on applying for the Ox Bow Project grant.

4. L. Spencer informed the members of the light turnout for the hike at the town forest with Jim Frohn. B. Nesheim indicated that he, his wife, and Anne Packard thoroughly enjoyed the very interesting and informative hike. Bill stated that Jim liked the way the property was being mowed to encourage insect habitat for the birds and other wildlife. They saw a blue bird and felt the cleared area was filling in nicely. Jim indicated he would be willing to participate in another hike and it was agreed by all that we needed to do more public outreach, maybe approaching more urban towns and planning something for the fall before hunting season.

5. L. Spencer indicated that Conservation Matters article he wrote will appear in the June edition.

6. L. Spencer advised the members that he and R. Larochelle are still trying to reach out to the family of Anne Russell regarding the Town Farm property, they had sent a letter but have not received a response.

NEW ITEMS:

1. Mr. Spencer discussed the observation he recently made regarding the dead Elm trees at the town gazebo. He will remove them this fall. He will inquire about replacing them.
2. B. Nesheim spoke to the increasing concerns with cyanobacteria in the town's lake systems. Being on the planning board the use of fireworks over the lakes is being looked at for a ordinance to control them partly because of their phosphorus inputs. He does not think this is a major source and would like to see more of an effort to control nutrients inputs from septic systems and fertilizers. It may be something to consider, increasing the setbacks that state law applies and the idea that the town institute a septic system pump out regulation or health ordinance to reduce pollutants from systems that abut a water body, recognizing that the town does not have an enforcement officer or building code and this may be cumbersome to monitor and enforce. Discussion from the members regarding clear cut regulations, currently logging is not a conservation effort but is a tax revenue for the state. Not sure what can be done about increasing water front buffers.
3. See previous notes on LWCF grant under old items.
4. L. Spencer brought to the members attention the photo contest being held by NHACC that he emailed to all. Maybe the picture of the turtle B. Nesheim saw at the Ox Bow property could be entered or used in the grant application. Mr. Spencer also reminded

members that the annual meeting is scheduled for November 4 and a noted Artist-Naturalist, David Carroll is scheduled to be the guest speaker.

5. L. Spencer discussed the recent Sacket Supreme Court case in Idaho where the decision written by Justice Samuel Alito states that the Federal Clean Water Act jurisdiction extends only to wetlands that are "indistinguishable" from larger bodies of water by having a "continuous surface connection. Removing federal protection from these wetlands effectively places the burden on states to protect. Members agreed that the ruling ignored the science or hydrology of wetlands and waterbodies and unless states move to strengthen their own environmental laws, property owners will have considerable freedom to fill in wetlands without going through the federal permitting process previously required. B. Nesheim stated he felt that NH had reasonable wetlands protections already on the books. L. Spencer would encourage more local planning and state regulations may be needed to protect, and he will send out a link to the members for the new NHDES rule book which is under comment review currently.
6. Members discussed the knot weed at the transfer station appeared to be reduced and that there seems to be an abundance of furniture being dropped off by residents.

Next Meeting is September 12, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Lucinda M. Hannus
Land Use Administrator