

Town of Farmington  
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, July 15, 2020

**Commission Members Present:**

Laura Bogardus, Chairman  
Bill Fisher, Secretary  
Michelle Elbert  
Tom Sorensen

**Commission Members Absent:**

Randy Orvis, Vice Chairman  
Dave Connolly, Selectmen's Rep.  
Richard Ballou  
Larry Fitzgerald

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Bogardus called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Public Comment:**

Chairman Bogardus reviewed the by-laws and determined that a quorum of the members was present and that the meeting could proceed.

**4). Review of Minutes:**

February 12, 2020 – No errors or omissions

**Motion:** (Elbert, second Sorensen) to accept the minutes as written passed 4-0.

**5). Old Business:**

**a). By-Laws** – Chairman Bogardus said Mr. Connolly asked about the change to the attendance section of the by-laws.

Mrs. Elbert said it was very poorly worded.

Ms. Bogardus said Mr. Connolly said it was worded to say 4 unexcused absences within a 60 day period because it included forums, community events such as Hay Day and the regular monthly meetings.

Mrs. Elbert said if they want to keep that wording it needs to be explained more clearly.

Mr. Sorensen said the section says meetings and doesn't mention attendance at anything else.

Ms. Bogardus said that is only one of the contingencies and that the other says 4 unexcused absences in any 60 day period.

Mr. Fisher suggested it be changed to attendance at meetings or public events.

Members noted there is no requirement to attend public events in the by-laws.

Ms. Bogardus said the intent of the contingency is to encourage presence at meetings and participation at commission events to help ensure their success.

Consensus of the members was to add "and/or public events" to Article IX #2.

**Motion:** (Fisher, second Elbert) to approve the Conservation Commission By-Laws as amended passed 4-0.

**b). McCarthy Trail-** Mr. Fisher said the placards are located at the old fire station and they are considering putting them on some of the trees along the trail instead on posts stuck in the ground. He said that Jim Horgan was going to try to get some people together from Home Depot to help install the cutouts but has not done so yet.

He explained that about 3 years ago Home Depot agreed to work with the commission to create fairy tale themed cutouts on 4'x 8' sheets of plywood and install them along the trail to create a family friendly atmosphere there. They haven't been able to come up with a work team to put them up due to several employee changes during that time which may have caused the project to become lost in the shuffle he said.

Mr. Sorensen said the problem with putting the signs on the trees is they will require constant maintenance as the trees will try to push them out of the bark and will have to be reinstalled.

Ms. Bogardus said it's not that it's impossible to do but it's having the manpower to do it.

Discussion also included if it is necessary to set the posts in concrete, the maintenance needed to erect the signs on trees, tools and materials needed to post the cutouts, lack of electricity at the site and make teams of 2-3 people for preparing the holes and posting each sign.

Mr. Fisher said he would look into getting more help to get the signs posted.

Chairman Bogardus said that Goodwin Library Children's Services Director Kayla Morin-Riordan called her about doing a story walk along the McCarthy Trail to promote reading and provide an activity for kids since the library is unable to provide activities due to COVID-19. She said Mrs. Morin-Riordan was looking for potential financial support from the Con Com but since it is not conservation property this is more of an FYI for the members.

Mrs. Elbert asked if the library planned to take children on walks on the trail.

Ms. Bogardus said the idea is for parents to take their children walking on trail and read the story together as they go along.

Mr. Fisher asked if the pages would be laminated or encased and how they would be set up.

Ms. Bogardus said she thought the project is in the beginning stages and that Mrs. Morin-Riordan was researching ideas and seeking suggestions and support.

## **6). New Business:**

**a). Barry Camp** – Chairman Bogardus said Barry Camp has been canceled for this year and suggested they send this year's chosen camper to camp next year.

Mr. Fisher said they did not yet pay for this year's session and suggested they could set the money aside in the budget for next year.

Ms. Bogardus said the camp is having a lot of financial difficulty due to being closed for the season and asked if the members wished to make a donation to the camp to help keep it going.

Mrs. Elbert asked if they would be pre-paying for the spot next year or making a donation.

Ms. Bogardus said they would be making a donation to the camp now and then reapply for a

slot next year.

Mr. Fisher said the Town budget could be impacted by the lack of revenue from the state because of the COVID-19 shutdown and some depts. were asked to prepare to suggest places their budgets could be cut in the event the budget revenue falls short of what was projected.

Ms. Bogardus said she was not approached by the Town about any budget cuts and that so far nothing has been expended from the Con Com budget this year. She said this donation would be conservation related and she didn't think would be any issue with a donation and she will check into it. She asked the members if they wanted to make a donation and if so at what amount.

**Motion:** (Elbert, second Fisher) to make a donation of \$150 to the Barry Conservation 4-H Camp passed 4-0.

**b). Signs at Town Forest** – Chairman Bogardus said the signs are in horrible repair and the members could repair them or put the work out to bid and hire someone to repair them. Mr. Fisher said he tried to repair one of them and had to make a “best as you can” repair to it. Consensus of the members was to ask Chairman Bogardus to put out a Request for Proposals for revamping of the signs.

**c). EAB Study at the French Property** – Chairman Bogardus said the commission was informed by UNH they are doing a study on the Emerald Ash Borer on the French property with the permission of NH Fish and Game. She said she would send everyone a copy of the study by e-mail. The study includes a biological testing on a group of trees and they will revisit the site at the end of the year to view the results of the testing she said.

**d). Barry Keith Invoice** – Ms. Bogardus said Mr. Keith sent the commission an invoice in March for the spring inspection of the French lot in the amount of \$715 and that she asked the Finance Administrator to pay the bill in April.

**e). Conservation Property Monitoring** – Chairman Bogardus said the property monitor visited the sites and reported the following:

Dubois property- in good shape with a small patch of trash;

French property- trees are down and need to be addressed, some trash was found, the tree stand encroaching on the trail that was supposed to be removed by Fish & Game is still there. Mr. Sorensen said he has contacted the state agency and has never gotten a response.

Ms. Bogardus said the monitor now knows about it too and plans to contact Fish & Game and that she would also follow up on this.

Mr. Sorensen suggested that colored arrows be stenciled on the trees adjacent to the trail to inform hikers of the way directly to the trail head or continue walking the loop around. He said there was also some discussion about putting in a new map at the entrance.

**f). Wetlands Management** – Ms. Bogardus said they received a copy of the Best Management Practices for Wetlands manual and she would add it to their library.

**g). Election of Officers** – Mr. Fisher said the election of officers is supposed to take place at the

first meeting after the Annual Town Meeting in March but no meetings have been held since February because of COVID-19.

Chairman Bogardus asked if the members wished to postpone elections until next year.

**Motion:** (Fisher, second Sorensen) that Laura Bogardus remain as Chairman, Randy Orvis remain as Vice Chairman and Bill Fisher remain as Secretary until after the next Town Meeting passed 4-0.

**h). Any Other New Business – Master Plan** – Mr. Fisher said the members received copies of the draft Natural Resources Chapter for the proposed revision of the Master Plan being developed by the Planning Board in conjunction with Arnett Development Group. He said the Planning Board would like the Con Com to take a look at the chapter and see if there is anything that needs to be corrected or added or if it is fine as it is.

He drew their attention to the last pages containing the policies, goals and actions and suggested possible goals that could be added would be to mark the conservation trails in town and to have an educational center at the McCarthy Trail and an action step would be to research and apply for the funding to meet those goals.

He asked the members to provide their suggestions for what they would like to see included in the chapter and e-mail them to him as soon as possible and he will submit them to the Planner.

**7). FYI:**

The following Intent to Cut notices were received:

Tax Map R47, Lot 1- Kevin Jackson, owner, 40 acres cut

Tax Map R42, Lot 7- Ruth Scruton, owner, 100+/- acres cut

Tax Map R43, Lot 10- Eric Minis, owner, 5 acres cut

Tax Map R63, Lot 16- Wendy Wiseman Direct Forest Stewardship, owner, 60 acres cut

Tax Map U07, Lot 15- Farmington Cemetery Assoc., 35 acres cut

Tax Map R40, Lot 10- Michael Stewart, owner, 3 acres cut

Tax Map R 21, Lot 5-15- Dottie Bean, owner, 40 acres cut

Tax Map R7, Lot 3- Tim O'Rourke, owner, 33 acres cut

**8). Upcoming Dates:**

Next Con Com Meeting – August 12, 2020

**9). Adjournment:**

**Motion:** (Sorensen, second Elbert) to adjourn the meeting passed 4-0 at 7:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary

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Laura Bogardus, Chairman