

Town of Farmington
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Commission Members Present:

Laura Bogardus, Chairman
Bill Fisher, Secretary
Michelle Elbert
Tom Sorensen
Doug Staples, Selectmen's Rep.

Commission Members Absent:

Randy Orvis, Vice Chairman, excused
Larry Fitzgerald, excused
Richard Ballou, excused

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: None

4). Review of Minutes:

February 10, 2021 – Public Meeting Minutes – No errors or omissions

Motion: (Fisher, second Elbert) to accept the minutes of Feb. 10, 2021 as written passed 4-0-1 (Staples abstained).

5). New Business:

a). Blue Job Trail Maintenance – Chairman Bogardus said she had a conversation with the trail maintenance division of the NH Parks and Recreation Dept. and they plan to do a site walk of the Blue Job trails and discuss maintenance of the trails sometime this spring. She said she is trying to get people together to do the trail maintenance but she has only had 1 response so far and the dept. has offered to help organize and run the volunteer group.

Mr. Staples asked what type of maintenance they are looking to have done.

Chairman Bogardus said there are a lot of birch trees down across the trail that are currently frozen in the ice but there is the possibility that some of them will spring up out of the way in the spring and there is some other chainsaw work that needs to be done.

Mr. Sorensen said there are also some conservation areas where the brush and thorns get really thick and need to be cleared out.

Chairman Bogardus said they did not want people to go in and start clearing things out without notifying them first and finding out what they want done. She said the state Parks Dept. has a trail maintenance system in place so they will be able to pull people in and will be able to head it up too. She said they have a new map which has been posted on the Town website and there are new signs on the trail so hopefully everything is very clear now.

b). Seacoast Harvest Donation – Chairman Bogardus said they received a donation request from Seacoast Harvest who operate the **Seacoast Area Mobile Market** van but they don't have a mobile market site scheduled yet. She said last year they focused on food pantries more than the SAMM van because of COVID-19 so they are going to continue to do that and are asking for a donation. She said last year the commission donated at the Seed Sponsor level (\$100) and asked if the members would be interested in doing that again.

Motion: (Elbert, second Sorensen) to donate \$100 this year passed 5-0.

c). Spring Cleanup- Chairman Bogardus said they usually conduct the clean up around Earth Day (Thursday, April 22) and suggested they do it on Sat., Apr. 24 or Sun. Apr. 25 or the following weekend which is Sat., May 1 or Sun., May 2. She asked the members if they prefer to do it on a Saturday or a Sunday and noted that Mr. Staples volunteered to help out with his truck.

Mr. Fisher said he could help out with his truck and a trailer.

Chairman Bogardus asked the members to pick a date for the cleanup and then discuss some different methods of doing the cleanup. She said Mr. Staples said that he handed out bags to people in New Durham and they cleaned their roads and then he picked up the bags. She said she liked the idea of people doing their own roads but she didn't know if that would be an issue with the Police and safety concerns.

Mr. Sorensen suggested that it not be done on any of the major routes in town such as Route 11 or Main Street.

Mrs. Elbert said she liked the idea of picking a date and then have people pick up bags at the Town Office to do their own streets.

Mr. Staples said when they pick up their bags they can tell us which road or part of a road they will clean up and then one of the members can swing by and pick up the bags.

Mr. Fisher asked if they would also hand out gloves and safety vests.

Ms. Bogardus said she would be comfortable doing that and asking people to return the items. It could be experimental this year and we have to think of a way to get more of a turnout she said.

Mr. Staples said with COVID-19 people aren't going to want to hang out with people they don't know.

Mr. Fisher said if it doesn't work they can return to the way they usually do it for the fall cleanup. He said if they do it on Apr. 24 he could hand the stuff out at the Town Office Building.

Ms. Bogardus said if other people want to go with the commission members they could that and they would keep it loosely structured as long as they know where people are.

Mrs. Elbert asked Mr. Staples when he did this if he scheduled a particular day for the cleanup to be done or just schedule the day that he would pick up the bags.

Mr. Staples said he advertised for 3 weeks out to do it on a Saturday and told people he would be at the Fish and Game Clubhouse at 8-8:30 a.m. and people showed up there to grab the stuff there. He said he did the roads he thought needed to be done and then people messaged him

with the roads they were on and he went out that afternoon and picked up their bags. Mr. Fisher suggested they do it on a Saturday and have Sunday to fall back on if they needed more time to finish picking up the trash. He said the residents could pick up their bags at the Town Offices from 8 a.m. to noon and then call them when the bags are ready to be picked up. Chairman Bogardus said they should get flyers made up to advertise the cleanup and it needs to be worded in a way so people know it is not the same old thing.

Mrs. Elbert suggested posting it on Facebook with big letters saying “We’re doing it differently this year”.

Mr. Sorensen suggested it also emphasize that “You choose your own road”. He said they also need to choose a contact person so people can contact them for the trash pickup.

Mr. Fisher volunteered to be the contact person and have his phone number posted.

Chairman Bogardus said they didn’t need to include his number on the flyer or on Face book as people could get the phone number from him when they pick up their bags from him.

Consensus of the members was to schedule the cleanup day for Saturday, April 24.

d). Earth Day Tree Planting – Chairman Bogardus said the commission used to ask Cameron’s Home and Garden Center to donate a tree and then they would plant it for Earth Day.

Mr. Sorensen said he was looking into putting a pollinator garden in front of the Municipal Office Building to take the place of the ash trees that were removed and that might be something good to do for Earth Day and he was considering asking Cameron’s and Barron Bros. to sponsor his project.

Chairman Bogardus said they should hold off on an Earth Day planting until after they have a discussion about Mr. Sorensen’s proposal.

Mrs. Elbert said she would send him the information she received from Pollinator Pathways and maybe they could include a sign in the garden noting they are part of the Pollinator Pathways. She said this may be something the Woman’s Club may be interested in helping with.

Mr. Fisher said the Economic Development Committee handles the Adopt-a-Spot Program in town and the Goodwin Library has a pollinator garden.

Chairman Bogardus said these may be good people to team up with for this garden.

Mrs. Elbert said the library has a prolific plant in their garden called mountain mint that was covered with bees and butterflies last season and that library could give them some when it is time to plant the garden.

e). Officer Elections- Chairman Bogardus said there are 3 positions open with the first one being the Chairman.

Chairman -Motion: (Bogardus, second Staples) to nominate Bill Fisher for Chairman;

Mr. Fisher accepted the nomination and noted Ms. Bogardus has done a wonderful job as Chairman for the last 3 years.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

Vice Chairman – Motion: (Elbert, second Fisher) to nominate Randy Orvis for Vice Chairman;

Mr. Orvis was absent from the meeting.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

Secretary – Motion: (Sorensen, second Staples) to nominate Laura Bogardus for Secretary; Ms. Bogardus accepted the nomination.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

6). Old Business:

a). Story Trail – Ms. Bogardus gave the members copies of a handout from Goodwin Library Children’s Services Supervisor Kayla Morin-Riordin containing the costs for permanent story trail signs. She said Mrs. Morin-Riordin wrote that the cost was down from the initial quote of approx. \$6,000 for the frames before installation to about \$1,000 for the materials for 18 frames. She asked the members for motion on making a donation for the library project.

Motion: (Fisher, second Elbert) to donate \$500 seed money to get the project started;

Discussion: Mr. Staples asked what this was for.

Mr. Fisher said the library put out story plaques with kid’s stories along the McCarthy Trail and as they walked the trail kids and their parents would stop and read a few pages of a story at each frame and that over 200 people signed the guest book.

Discussion then included updating Mr. Staples on the other sign project at the McCarthy Trail where the commission has been attempting to get other placards containing Little Red Riding Hood characters installed with assistance from Home Depot who recently decided they would be unable to complete the project.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Staples asked where the commission gets its funding.

Mr. Fisher said they get a \$3,000 budget from the town and the majority of their funds come from the taxes raised when a property comes out of Current Use and owner has to pay those back taxes. He said they use that money to help with conservation easements and the maintenance/management of the town’s conservation lands.

Ms. Bogardus said the management of conservation lands would come from the Current Use funds and the donations such as this one to the library would come from the operating budget.

7). FYI:

Intent to Cut Notices – Mr. Fisher read the following notices:

1). Tax Map R03, Lot 004, NH Rote 11, lot size- approx. 6 acres and 5 acres will be cut, start date - March 20,2021, landowner-Joseph Pepe III

2). Tax Map R32, Lot 05, Chestnut Hill Road, land owner-Franklin G. Torr, submission date-Feb. 2021, 40 acres to be cut

8). Upcoming Dates:

April Con Com Meeting – Wednesday, April 14, 2021

9). Adjournment:

Motion: (Elbert, second Sorensen) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 6:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

Laura Bogardus, Chairman