Loudon Conservation Commission
November 4, 2019
Minutes

Attendance:  Members:  Julie Robinson, Sandy Sims, Polly Touzin, Jeff Moore, Sandra Blanchard
Alternate members:  Stephanie Aubert, Martha Butterfield

The November meeting began at 6pm with all members and alternates in attendance. Chair Robinson opened the meeting asking for acceptance of the October minutes. Sandra Sims made a motion to accept the minutes, with a second from Polly Touzin.

The chair then gave an update of the Capital Reserve Program Committee. The Committee will still need to meet a few more times, but the increase asked for by the Commission for the CRP fund was given positive support. The current amount deposited into the account each year is $30,000 and we are asking for that to be $50,000. This will allow the fund to grow more quickly and provide the funds needed to purchase land, easements and be competitive with any grant proposals that present themselves.

Chair Robinson then asked the group to choose between two dates that were provided by Howard Pearl and J.T. Horn for a site walk of the Pearl Farm to discuss the LCHIP grant they are working on for an easement on the property and the issue of public access. November 11, 2019 at 9am was the date decided on.

Annual dues to be members of the NH Association of Conservation Commissions need to be paid. The chair asked for a motion so that the bill could be paid. Sandra Blanchard made the motion to pay the dues and a second was made by Sandy Sims.

The Planning and Zoning Boards were not attended in October so no report was given.

Sandy Sims gave an update to the monitoring effort. Polly Touzin and Ms. Sims completed another property today and feel they will have all the LCIP, FRPP and Town easement lands completed by the end of year. The Chair thanked the monitors for the excellent work.

Sandra Blanchard gave an update on the Trails Committee. The Lovejoy Trails system is now complete. Martha Butterfield has done an excellent job keeping a permanent record of the work that has gone on by many dedicated volunteers. The documents produced by Ms. Butterfield include pictures and are very informative to read. There was some storm damage done on the trails and volunteers have already cut up and removed the down trees. There was some water that caused damage to the map on the kiosk and Ms. Blanchard is looking into ways to remedy the problem. Ms. Butterfield has produced a tri-fold brochure for the Lovejoy Trails that includes a map showing the different trails available on the property. She will email the brochure to Ms. Robinson who will get copies produced for distribution. It was agreed that the brochures should be distributed to the Town Office, Library and possibly the school. It will also be available on line at the Town’s website.

The Chair asked Ms. Blanchard what the Trails Committee’s next effort would be. Ms. Blanchard said they are discussing that currently but have not decided on their next project. Ms. Robinson suggested that perhaps they look at what other trails are already in town and what condition they are in. It would be nice to continue work on trails that have been started in the past before creating new ones.
Three members of the Commission attended the annual NHACC meeting on November 2, 2019. The chair asked them to give a brief update on their experience.

Ms. Blanchard enjoyed the conference and attended three different workshops during the day. A discussion on Land Trusts and Land Trust Coalition spoke about the Importance of protecting land and especially farm land in NH. They also discussed the importance of local food production. She also attended a workshop on recycling.

Polly Touzin also enjoyed the workshop, especially being able to meet other like minded people working for other Conservation Commissions. Ms. Touzin attended a workshop on shore land protection. The topic was interesting but somewhat confusing. She also attended a workshop that helped monitors read a survey map and said it was really quite helpful. And finally she attended a workshop that discussed the legal consideration on monitoring and survey.

Stephanie Aubert also attended the conference. Ms. Aubert went to a workshop on the fundamentals of Conservation Commissions. She was amazed that Commissions are quite different from Town to Town. She also attended a Natural Resource Inventory workshop and is very excited to get started on the process for Loudon. Ms. Aubert volunteered to lead the sub-committee that we will work with in 2020 to develop our NRI. And finally she attended a workshop on green infrastructure and storm water management.

The chair thanked them for attending and was pleased to hear they really felt it was a worthwhile conference.

Stephanie Aubert provided a training session on how to use Google Drive. A program that allows the upload of documents that can be saved and viewed by those that are invited to that particular drive. Ms. Aubert conducted a quick walk through the program and what it could be used for. Not only would this provide a safe place to hold the Conservation Commissions documents, but would allow members to access items like maps and forms for doing monitoring. The chair thanked Ms. Aubert for her presentation and suggested that the Commission members spend the next few months using the drive and confer with Ms. Aubert if they encounter problems or have questions. The Chair also suggested that the Trails Committee utilize one of these drives for their documents, but Ms. Blanchard felt that by placing them on the Town’s website was adequate.

Finally Ms. Robinson reminded the Commission that next month we would have members from the NHRPC attend our December meeting to discuss the process to create a Natural Resource Inventory for Loudon. This is a document that will be helpful in further planning in Loudon and will also be the base for our next chapter of the Master Plan.

Adjourn at 7:30pm