

Minutes of the Thetford Conservation Commission – November 9, 2016 - draft

Present: Li Shen, Libby Chapin, Steve Lehman, Jim McCracken, Jeff Smith, Ann Lavanway

Absent: Bob Pulaski

Guest: James Dixon of the Select Board, Sue Tallman, Ehrhard Frost

1. The minutes for October 12, 2016 were approved as amended.
2. Li brought in a sign that she had printed to mark areas where the Commission will be working on invasive plant removal.
3. Sue Tallman is interested in joining the Commission. She will send a letter of interest to the Select Board.
4. Jim McCracken was voted Vice Chair of the Commission.
5. The Commission members asked James if revenues from the stumpage receipts are available to fund town land management expenses. James said that these funds are available for town land management expenses.
6. The Commission members asked James if stumpage revenues carry over from year to year. He said that they can carry over from year to year.
7. The Town Meeting Article 8 reads: "Shall the Town transfer annually, the sum of \$5,000 into the Town Land Capital Fund, from the revenues of timber harvests, in those years that such land management is done, or when such funds may be available?" The Commission asked if \$5,000 will be available for town land management in years when stumpage revenue is not available. James does think the \$5,000 will be available each year and that remaining balances will carry over. He will check with the Select Board to get firm answers for all of our questions.
8. The group discussed the current timber harvest climate. It is likely that timber sale revenues will not yield the revenue from the Hughes Forest project for the foreseeable future.
9. The Commission asked James about the land on the Town Forest that abuts the Three Ponds property dam. James reported that talks are ongoing with Three Ponds landowner, Chris Lang. There may be other parties interested in purchasing the land. The purpose of selling the property was to allow Mr. Lang to properly maintain the dam. The Commission still recommends just enough to provide access to the dam.
10. The Commission asked James if any of the land will be conserved before the sale. James did not know if land conservation around the sale had been considered.
11. The Commission asked if we may bring a request to the Select Board for funds for work on the Taylor Flood Plain Forest because it has a management plan. James said yes.
12. Jeff spoke about a landlocked parcel near the dam. James said that the Select Board has agreed to accept the donation of the parcel.
13. The Select Board is still reading through the Town Plan document.
14. Li will ask Jill Graff about the cut off date for the 2016 budget.
15. Ehrhard reported on timber harvest project on the Town Forest. Due to current pulp wood prices, Dan Clark may need to turn the harvest over to another timber company.
16. The snowmobile club has requested changes to the trail on Hughes Forest. Ehrhard will contact the snowmobile club to discuss changes to the trails. The club will need to submit a proposal for these changes to the Commission. The Upper Valley Land Trust must also approve any changes to the trail.
17. The Commission discussed end of the year finances.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

Reminder that Commission members should let Li know ahead of time if they cannot attend the next Conservation Commission meeting, so that she may plan accordingly.

Our next meeting is December 14, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Lavanway