

Minutes of the Thetford Conservation Commission – July 12, 2017 - draft

Present: Sue Fritz, Steve Lehman, Jim McCracken, Ann Lavanway

Absent: Libby Chapin, Bob Pulaski, Jeff Smith, Sue Tallman

Guest: Ehrhard Frost

The Commission met with Ehrhard Frost to discuss town lands management priorities. Each of the following properties was discussed: Town Forest, Hughes Forest, Taylor Floodplain Forest and Post Mills Natural Area.

Town Forest:

The group discussed the timber harvest that is scheduled to be completed this winter. Ehrhard reported that there will be about two to three week's worth of harvest to finish the project and the harvest will involve about 20-25 acres. He estimates that the income from this work will be \$10K-\$12K.

We also discussed the boundary that is shared with Mr. Christopher Lang. Part of the dam for one of Mr. Lang's ponds is on the Town Forest. The Commission has recommended a boundary adjust to the Select Board so that the entirety of the dam resides on Mr. Lang's property.

Hughes Forest:

The boundaries on the north side of the property need to be located, flagged, blazed and painted. Ehrhard said that Jason Berard of UVLT thinks he can locate the line.

There is phragmites and honeysuckle around the pond that should be treated this year.

The site that was harvested a few years ago will have to be monitored and treated for invasive plants per the original plan for the harvest.

The group discussed future logging on the property. The proposed site is a steep slope. Exposing the slope may lead to damage during heavy rains. The Commission does not support logging on this site at this time.

Taylor Floodplain Forest:

The boundaries on the Taylor parcel need monuments set and boundaries marked.

The invasive plant coverage of the property is substantial. To try to significantly reduce the invasive plant coverage would take thousands of dollars over several years. Flood plains are also especially susceptible to the introduction of invasive plants during times of high water levels. Such events will continue to bring invasive plants on to the property.

Post Mills Natural Area:

The Commission would like to work with the Thetford Fire Department to do another controlled burn on the parcel.

The group discussed managing part of the area for grassland nesting birds or creating an early successional forest for wildlife on part of PMNA.

Ellis Paige is concerned about getting his mowing equipment over the drainage area on the parcel. The group discussed having fabric and stone added to the area where he crosses the drainage.

Mr. Paige has also requested that we reevaluate the size of the areas that are being mowed. He has asked if it would be possible to make them more equivalent in size. The group discussed possible changes to the current mowing plots.

Action items:

Request a meeting with the Select Board to discuss town lands maintenance funds. Should the article about the Town Land Maintenance money be re-written?

Discuss establishing an order of operations for spending money on the maintenance of town lands with the Select Board.

Ask the Select Board to work with the Commission and Mr. Lang to settle the boundary issue around Mr. Lang's dam.

Request funds from the Select Board for work on Hughes: Boundary work and treat phragmites and honeysuckle this year.

Request funds from the Select Board for Ehrhard to get cost estimates for a survey of the Taylor Floodplain Forest.

Request funds from the Select Board for repairing the drainage crossing on PMNA.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

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

Our next meeting is August 9, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Lavanway