

Minutes of the Thetford Conservation Commission – March 22, 2017

Present: Bob Pulaski, Libby Chapin, Jim McCracken, Jeff Smith, Sue Tallman, Sue Fritz, Ann Lavanway

Absent: Steve Lehman

Guest: Li Shen, Select Board liaison

1. The meeting minutes from February 23, 2017 were approved as amended.
2. The Commission elected officers. Sue Fritz and Ann Lavanway will be co-chairs, Jim McCracken will be vice-chair, Bob Pulaski will be treasurer and Sue Tallman will be the secretary.
3. Jeff will be the liaison for projects done with the Town Forester.
4. Li will be the Commission's Select Board liaison.
5. Li reminded the group that meeting agendas must be posted 48 hours before the meeting and the agenda must be posted in at least three places.
6. The Commission was contacted by Megan Chapman of UVLT. She wrote to request a letter of support and possible financial support for a conservation project in Ely. The Commission will request more information about the project from Megan. If the land to be conserved is in Thetford, the Commission agreed to send a letter of support, but will need additional information about the project before voting on financial support for the project.
7. The group talked about town lands maintenance projects for 2017. Some possible projects include marking boundaries, treating invasive plants on the Taylor Floodplain Preserve and treating phragmites on Hughes Forest. The group will revisit project priorities at the next meeting. Jeff will also talk with the Town Forester, Ehrhard Frost about possible projects.
8. Jeff reminded the group that the town may acquire land near the Union Village Dam. The current landowner is interested in giving the parcel to the town. We may need to spend maintenance money on inventories and other work on this parcel. The group discussed doing a crown jewel walk on the property. Jeff will contact Stuart Rogers of the Select Board to find out the status of the gift.
9. There was discussion about completing the trail on PMNA. Libby and Jim talked about having a work party that would include neighbors of the property.
10. Libby told the group that the brook crossing on PMNA may need more work.
11. The group discussed mowing on the Taylor Floodplain Preserve. Sue Fritz will talk with Connie Snyder about getting in touch with the Taylors. The Commission will need to decide on the trail location, trail size and the frequency of mowing.
12. Li reported that Jill Graff contacted the Select Board to let them know that income from the Town Forest logging project for this year will fall short of the budgeted \$53K. To date, the Town has received approximately \$26K in revenue from the harvest. Loggers have finished for the year. There are 20 acres of the harvest project that have not been logged. Ehrhard will be talking to the Select Board about the harvest within the next few weeks.
13. Jim and Libby updated the group on educational events for this year. They plan to get started early on invasive plant pulling events. Libby will send a letter to the Select Board for getting a waiver at the Lebanon landfill for the garlic mustard plants.
14. Jim and Libby will be posting Big Night signs when temperatures get warmer and amphibians begin to migrate.

15. Li reported that there is no update from the gliding club about cutting trees on PMNA.
16. Bob told the group that we received \$70.00 in donations from the Tom Tynning talk. The donations will be split with the West Fairlee Conservation Commission.
17. Libby has arranged to get a copy of Mary Holland's new book for Tom Tynning. The Commission will pay for half and the West Fairlee Conservation Commission will pay for the other half.
18. Libby reminded the group that the UVLT meeting for conservation commissions will be held next Thursday. The focus of the meeting will be training for iNaturalist.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56PM.

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

Our next meeting is April 12, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Lavanway