

Thetford Conservation Commission Minutes

June 14, 2017

Present: Ann Lavanway, Sue Fritz, Bob Pulaski, Jim McCracken, Sue Tallman, Steve Lehman, Libby Chapin

Absent: Jeff Smith

Guest: Scott Ellis, Director of Thetford Academy's Outdoor Education Program

- 1 May 10, 2017 Minutes were amended and approved.
- 2 Scott Ellis was introduced. He explained the new academic class offering at TA. The program will meet 3 hours each day as a 2 science credit class. The main focus is to offer outdoor experience including related reading assignments, community involvement, capstone projects, recreational activities and online outreach. Scott will be looking for local mentors, communication with Thetford committees, especially the TCC, to become involved with students in their endeavors. The Outdoor Program includes a multi-purpose bus for off campus trips and an Outdoor Center building which will be constructed with independent funding. Libby described the past and future programs sponsored by TCC Education committee. Scott's email will be added to TCC list. TCC offered to advertise student capstone projects and suggested several topics to Scott such as, bird walks, ephemeral migrations, invasive control, and water quality testing. Scott plans to have students develop a TA natural science website. Names of local contacts were mentioned as possible mentors. This new program was seen by the board as a new opportunity to enlarge the educational outreach for TCC.
- 3 Fund balance report by Bob Polaski: \$646.62 Operating Fund
123.21 Garlic mustard Fund
27,263 Conservation Trust Fund

The \$5K warrant donation to the UVLT/New Hope Farm is on the Selectboard agenda for Monday night 6/19/17. Future contributions to TCC will be listed as "non tax revenue" and the balance not used at the end of the year will be added to the Town General Fund. Jim suggested purchase of weed pulling tool costing approx. \$159. Moved and seconded to purchase new weed puller with the remainder of garlic fund (\$123.21). Motion passed. Bob and several members of the TCC plan to attend Monday SB meeting for discussion of TCC funding. Ehrhart Frost will also be present.
- 4 Libby reported on garlic mustard pulling results which she also posted on the Thetford list serve. Collection amount down from last year due to earlier pulling of smaller plants and hopefully fewer. She suggested upgrading map for next year and timing the garlic pulling with Green Up Day before or after. Libby thanked everyone for their participation. New invasive plants were discussed. Spurge on UVDam site and Knotweed near 91exit.
- 5 Libby and Jim reported the Education committee is planning a film festival in August and the plans for "Secret Lives" are continuing.
- 6 Steve said the May 13th bird walk at the Taylor track was well attended and the refreshments delicious.
- 7 Sue Fritz was concerned with declining milkweed patches. There was Interest to see if recent burn area in Post Mills will show regrowth of milkweed.
- 8 Ehrhart Frost's May 26, 2017 letter to the TCC board and the Thetford Selectboard concerning invasive plants and possible treatments on town properties was discussed. Ann suggested asking Ehrhart Frost for a time line and cost plan for invasive plant removal at the Hughes Forest and his charge to do this.

A walk at the Hughes Forest is planned instead of a meeting on July 12. Those who are attending should meet at the Town Hall at 6 pm to car pool to site.

Respectfully submitted – Sue Tallman