

Thetford Conservation Commission Minutes

January 10, 2018

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

The Minutes of December 13, 2017 were approved.

Libby gave an update on the winter educational program event. The Education Committee is still reviewing film choices of which there are many. A date in early February is planned with a potluck chili dinner between films. Choosing a Film with a celebratory theme is the Committee's goal. Planning an outdoor tracking program is a possibility. Thetford Academy notified Libby that the newly built Yurt is available for TCC events.

Sue Fritz reported on progress of the Enhanced Energy Sub-Committee. Maps which show layered current uses in Thetford were the main focus of discussion. By 2050 roughly 100 acres may be required to be developed in Thetford to generate sufficient energy to meet our 90% renewable energy goal. The desirable sites need to be near power stations and are generally near Route 5 and waterways. The Energy Sub-Committee is meeting with Twin Rivers Resource Committee for advice with this project.

In preparation for March Town Meeting, Ann will reserve a table with the Town Clerk. Libby will provide a poster with photos, a summary of TCC programs in 2017 and promotional materials for the film festival. Jeff and Jim will contribute photos also. A map of the New Hope Farm Conservation Project will be displayed with photos if available. A hand out flyer was suggested to encourage citizen participation with a "Looking Forward" theme.

Ann gave a report on the January 8, 2017 Select Board meeting. The Board was receptive to the TCC 2018 budget requests. The Select Board is in agreement that Ehrhart Frost will report directly with the TCC. Ann will ask Ehrhart for an updated forestry proposal and Jeff will ask him to sign off on the Town Land logging work order. Wood deposited by the Thetford DPW from the storm cleanup will need to be removed before completion of the logging on the Town Land is possible.

Everyone participated in suggesting priorities and new projects for 2018.

- 1) Inform residents of the town lands i.e.: locations, size, trails, flora and fauna opportunities. Organizing Saturday strolls was mentioned.
- 2) The invasive plant removal dilemma needs to be addressed. Is removal for wildlife benefit? This would need an expert educator to speak to town residents. Invasive plant removal by a small number of volunteers is a monumental task and the results are discouraging.
- 3) Which goal would be a more worthwhile focus: removal of invasives or picking up road trash
- 4) What are the future UVLT projects that could involve help from the TCC. There is little possibility of the Town of Thetford purchasing further parcels.
- 5) Cultivating local conservation partners to expand TCC's efforts. Ann will contact the Linking Land Alliance and invite a representative to attend a future TCC meeting.
- 6) Educating landowners to understand the connection between human activity and wildlife survival when making property use decisions. Specifically in creating buffer zones to protect water sources. Creating an informational pamphlet was mentioned.

- 7) Engage in cleanup volunteer efforts of local rivers, lakes and ponds with other organizations.
- 8) Campaign for Green Up Day and Arbor Day

Next meeting will be February 14, 2018 at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Tallman