



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

## **APPROVED Minutes of the February 18, 2015 Conservation Commission Meeting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chairman), Laura Alexander, Mike Gelcius, Mark Vernon, Terry Dancy, Ruth White, Andy Deegan**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Allen**

**OTHERS: Jane McMurrich (New London Resident), Lucy St. John (Planning & Zoning Administrator)**

Chair Brown opened the meeting at 8:30am.

### Minutes of January 21, 2015

**IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Ruth White) to approve the minutes of January 20, 2015, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Brown said some months ago he saw an ad in local publications advertising for open positions in New London's boards and committees. As a result, the Conservation Commission received a letter of interest from Jane McMurrich who was present at the meeting to find more about the Commission. Ms. McMurrich said she has owned a home in New London for the past 10 years and moved to town full-time from the Boston area in November. She has taught both biology and environmental science and was on the Natural Resources Commission in Wellsley and dealt with things such as tree cuttings, conserving land and recreational use of land. She has had an interest in environmental things and thought it would be a good opportunity for her to get involved in the Town.

### Applications – Lucy St. John, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Ms. St. John said the Planning Board is currently talking about possible zoning amendments, one of which is changing the definition of "family", another is possible changes to the site plan ordinance, and has to do with changes in the sign ordinance. She thought after this round of changes they would address other issues such mapping all of the streams and wetlands in town. She said she would be happy to answer any questions they may have about these possible changes in the ordinance. There were none.

Chair Brown asked about land management/policies, specifically the issue of people camping on town property. This has come up and it seems there is no ruling or ordinance that says it can't be done. He has talked with Ms. Hallquist about this in the past because they have had two instances of this happening; once at the Phillips Preserve and occasionally at Clark Lookout. Chair Brown said that any lands under the management or control of the Conservation Commission can have reasonable policies set by the Conservation Commission. His initial feeling is that they need to do something to control possible camping on Town lands. He didn't want to make a policy saying that camping isn't allowed anywhere, but perhaps only with the approval of the Conservation Commission.

Chair Brown thought perhaps they could check to see if other towns have such a policy to see if maybe it would fit with New London's situation. Mr. Deegan said with Ausbon Sargent, the easement holders have the right to post against camping if they wish. Their concern is the condition of the land and they will take issue if the land is being damaged. They don't want to be against camping as these are lands that are conserved for people to use for outdoor enjoyment. The concerns were with fires and sanitation.

Ms. White thought perhaps posting a sign for "no fires" would be a first step to keeping camping off of the properties. Ms. St. John asked if there was anything in the Conservation Commission brochures to dissuade people from camping on their properties. Chair Brown said they did not. Ms. St. John said she would contact

the Forest Society to see what words they use. Mr. Vernon said he would contact the New Hampshire Conservation Commission.

#### *Clark Lookout*

Mr. Deegan said the gate across the trail is locked to keep out cars but the trail, itself is not posted. He said Ausbon Sargent has no right to use the gate to get through there with vehicles. If the Town has a different position on the matter, that is their own issue that needs to be taken up with the landowner.

Mr. Deegan said that he heard from Ms. Hallquist that a forester would be going up to the area. Chair Brown added that Leo Maslin, Forester, would be going in there to assess any potentially dangerous trees, which the landowner was worried would fall on someone.

#### *Hale Property*

Mr. Deegan said Mr. Hale is still working to clean up his property and still intends to sell it to the Town.

#### *Trail Maps*

Ms. Alexander said she was not able to download the data from the GPS that Mr. Allen had recorded.

#### *Intern Job Description*

Ms. Alexander asked if this was to be a paid or unpaid internship. She said interns used to have to work 244 hours for it to qualify as an internship; they are now only required to work 160 hours to get credit. She said the duties of the intern would be to update the trail maps and create interpretive trail guides. Ms. White said her intention was to get someone to create a map for new trails. When asked what internships generally pay, Ms. Alexander said it varies widely. She said the students have to pay for housing to stay around to take on an internship and so a paid internship would likely attract more candidates. Mr. Vernon thought perhaps the intern could assist with marketing and help to get the word out for Conservation Commission activities. It was thought that the position could be 160 hours in length. Ms. Alexander said she would put a job description together and give it to the Conservation Commission members to review.

#### *Trail Intern Position*

Chair Brown said the hourly rate for this position may need to increase to be able to keep the intern they had last year, who worked out very well.

#### *Other Trail Projects*

Mr. Vernon wondered how the Beaver Deceiver would fare with ice build-up in the streams. Mr. Gelcius thought it would be fine as it was pretty solid and is positioned in such a way that it shouldn't go anywhere.

Mr. Vernon said he met with the owners of Huberts about having the proposed power line trail end near their parking lot instead of on Newport Road. They weren't opposed to it but would like more details; they feel it is an interesting project.

Mr. Vernon asked if he needed to remind Richard Lee (Public Works Director) about the dog waste disposal kiosks. Chair Brown said he thought the Commission could purchase them directly without going through the Public Works Department.

#### Signs

Mr. Vernon said he would pick up a router from Mr. Dancy's car after the meeting and would schedule a time with Chair Brown to go to his workshop to get a lesson on sign-making.

#### Equipment

Chair Brown asked if there were any additions to the tool list. Mr. Vernon said he would finalize the list and send it to Chair Brown.

Other Business

Mike Gelcius said they would be doing the duck boxes again this year after some of the snow melts. He said they will try to avoid Merganzers by making the boxes deeper, which attracts the Wood Ducks. Mr. Vernon wondered if duck boxes could be put up in other areas. Mr. Gelcius said that was something they could consider. When asked, he said the Elkins Fish & Game Club cleans out the boxes near the Kidder property (Cascade Pond).

Chair Brown said with regards to the Mary Haddad Trust, he believes the Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen would in favor of meeting to discuss the funds and how they could work together to use them. It was thought that the power line trail could fall under the acceptable uses of the money, as defined by the trust.

The next meeting is planned for March 18, 2015 at 8:30am.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London