



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## **APPROVED Minutes of the March 21, 2012 Conservation Commission Meeting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Brown (Chairman), Dan Allen, Andy Deegan, Terry Dancy, Laura Alexander, Sue Clough, Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Emma Crane, Bob Crane (Webmaster)**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: Rick Anderson, Ruth White**

Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

### Review of Minutes of February 15, 2012

It was noted that the last name of the person from Fish & Game was "Cook."

**IT WAS MOVED (Laura Alexander) AND SECONDED (Andy Deegan) to approve the minutes of February 15, 2012, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### Low Plain

Mr. Deegan said he had been in touch with Rich Cook who has sent the invoice for stewardship. He said they need to inform him if they do anything with utilities or parking. With regards to the beaver dam, should the beavers go away or if the dams crumble, he would like them to combine the dams into one or create a new structure. The ability of Fish & Game to come and post the property was something he felt they should be concerned about. Mr. Deegan suggested having a letter sent to Fish & Game noting that with the approval of the Conservation Commission, the property could be posted. Mr. Stanley said that the only reasons to close the property would be for safety issue having to do with logging or construction, or the because of some endangered species that is nesting that may need to be left alone for an amount of time.

Chair Brown said he would take the invoice to Ms. Hallquist after the meeting, which was for \$5,000.00 and had been budgeted for.

### Phillips Preserve

Mr. Deegan said that Ausbon Sargent approved the easement and they are just waiting for Town Meeting.

Chair Brown said that he has not been able to get in touch with Dave Carey and he welcomed help from anyone who may have time, to contact him about inventorying a couple of 30+ acre properties in New London. The parcels are owned by the Town.

### Budget

Chair Brown said that their total budget was \$17,500 and they have only spent \$3,000. They have just received the \$5,000 invoice, which means they have only spent \$8,000 so far. He offered that if there was something that needed to be done (that would use some of their funds) they should do it. They should, however, be careful about how they are spending the money. Mr. Stanley said they had discussed getting some motorized tools to help with trail maintenance for the summer. Chair Brown agreed and asked if everyone was comfortable with him and Mr. Stanley researching the items and purchasing them. Mr. Stanley said that they also need to provide training, and protective clothing and equipment that is necessary to be used with these tools. No one had a problem with Chair Brown and Mr. Stanley handling

this. Mr. Stanley said that a good quality brush cutter would be about \$1,000.00. A good weed-whacker would be about \$250.00 and the clothing and gear would be another couple hundred dollars.

#### Invasive Species

Mr. Dancy said that he spoke to Mr. Hopwood about some Knotweed that he had gotten rid of. He first cut it down and pulled it. When it was re-emerging he used Round-Up.

#### Town Meeting

Town Meeting will be held Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, with voting on Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. Chair Brown said they will have their three articles on the ballot this year regarding donations to other towns/organizations in an effort to conserve land through easements. He would like to get together and discuss how they will present the articles. Mr. Stanley said they will need to think about how they should present the information to win over the people who opposed the articles at last year's Town Meeting. He believed that Jack Sheehan had changed his mind and is now in favor of the articles. Mr. Allen said he would speak with Noel Weinstein and Ms. Clough said she would talk with David Cook regarding the articles and why they should pass this year.

#### Trails & Projects

Chair Brown said that he, Mr. Stanley, Chad Denning (Recreation Director), and PSNH had a meeting with New London Hospital regarding a trail on the hospital's land. Mr. Denning is interested in partnering with the Conservation Commission to make this happen. The trail would begin near the Newport Road sidewalk to behind Huberts and just before Parkside. It would be cut behind one house to keep people from continuing along their driveway, and it would connect to the Lyon Brook Trail. Mr. Denning had said he would walk the property with PSNH as there is an easement there for access to the power lines and also to sewer lines. Chair Brown believed it to be a 60' wide right-of-way and thought they could find a proper place to run the path. There were some wet areas but they didn't seem to be too big a problem. Mr. Stanley said he walked the area recently and said it was a shame it couldn't come right from the road as it would be an easy walk to Parkside. He thought it would be possible and could be done without intruding on private property. Chair Brown said that Mr. Denning had mentioned putting some gravel on the path. Also, the Town would keep the area mowed. Ms. Clough thought they should talk to the people on either side of the trail to let them know of their preliminary plans. Mr. Stanley said that people are already using the trail and that one of the abutters has mentioned this to him.

Chair Brown said that he made new signs for Phillips Preserve. The ones along the entrance were in bad shape and one up on the trail that goes to Quarry Lookout needed to be repainted. Signs at Clark Lookout were ready to be put up and Mr. Stanley said he would do it.

Mr. Allen said he was able to ski the trails at Clark Pond a few times after the last snow storm. He said a new beaver lodge has been built in the last year. They have been eating at Bog Road by the boat launch at Messer Pond.

Mr. Allen proposed to put in two benches: One would be at Messer Brook on the Norman Trail to take advantage of a nice vista near a stream. Another would be at the end of Clark Pond. He would put these in soon.

#### *Kidder-Cleveland-Clough Trail*

Chair Brown said he received a call from Steve Root who lives in Job Seaman's Acres. He was one of the property owners who were concerned with the beaver problem and rising water. Mr. Root said he had been talking with his wife about the trail, which does not run on their property, but was near their property line. They can see people and their dogs walking and that people sometimes allow their dogs to wander onto their property. Mr. Root suggested another routing of the trail to keep it further from his

property and wondered how they would feel about moving it. Chair Brown told Mr. Root that with all the miles of trail they have to maintain, the moving of this trail may not be on their top priority list of things to do.

Mr. Stanley said that he spoke with Mrs. Root, who called him because the beavers had come back and she was worried about more flooding. He suggested that her husband work on finding another route and that permission would need to be granted from Greg Berger from Springledge, as his property would be where the re-route would most likely be located. The re-route would need to be approved by the Conservation Commission, who would also need to re-direct the trail and block off the old route.

Mr. Stanley said he was not happy with the last beaver location that was done. He couldn't get the trapper to return his phone calls and has given up on using him again. Bill Anderson from Springfield came in and caught the largest beaver he said he had ever seen. He then had to stop trapping due to some health issues and since retired. He is trapping again as he has more time. When the trapping season is in, there is no charge. If he has to trap out of season, he will charge. Ms. Root wondered if the Conservation Commission could pay for the relocation, since it would be out of season. Mr. Stanley said he didn't think so and Ms. Root thought they could pay the \$50 for beaver relocation. He thought this raised an issue that perhaps they should have an animal control budget for use in these kinds of situations although he didn't feel that public money should be used on private land unless it directly benefited the town.

Chair Brown was reluctant to put a line item in their budget for this kind of thing. He thought perhaps the people who live in the area where flooding is a problem due to the beavers could come together to pay for this sort of thing.

Ms. Clough agreed that the trail was very close to the Root property and thought they should move it. She is familiar with the Springledge property, as she used to own it.

Mr. Crane said there is already a start of a trail that goes from the fence at Springledge and it has been there for a couple of years. Ms. Clough said that they should ask Mr. Berger to put up more signage regarding a powerful electric fence in this area so that people will stay away from it.

#### *Bridge Repair*

Mr. Stanley said that Mark Vernon wants to replace a bridge that washed downstream. He would be able to haul some material in the area if Mr. Vernon could get permission for him to come in with his tractor. Mr. Stanley explained that to get to the area in question, someone would need to go up the road that is on the Baxter property (Baxter Road) and where it reaches the brook, this is the trail where the bridge should go. Mr. Vernon would find out if they could get permission to travel this road to repair/replace the bridge.

Ms. Crane said while they were on the Kidder-Clough-Cleveland trail, there were some trail signs that needed to be added behind the old school and (taking a left behind Pleasant Street). She agreed to get a list of these specific signs to Chair Brown.

#### Summer Intern

Chair Brown said that they wanted to get a jump on this earlier this year. He spoke with Ms. Hallquist about how they should go about hiring for the position. Last year they paid \$40 for the ad to be posted and they had about two applicants out of about 13, who were viable candidates. Ms. Hallquist suggested putting the posting on the Town's website and the college's website; there is no law that they have to post the ad anywhere in particular or for any length of time.

Chair Brown said that he has received two applicants from the college so far and shared that they plan to interview the boys the following Wednesday. Chair Brown said if anyone knew of any other possible candidates, they should let him know.

#### Merrimac County Department of Corrections

Chair Brown said that he had put in a request for six days and all the dates they asked for were taken. MCDC responded with dates that were still available. They don't work on weekends and it was found that Fridays work well, as Mr. Stanley has the day off and can help. Chair Brown said that they got approved for six Fridays, the first of which is April 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Stanley suggested finishing the clean-up at Clark Lookout. Ms. Clough said she would ask her husband, John, if he would be able to help with this. Chair Brown said if anyone else would like to join them, he would welcome the help. Mr. Allen said he would like help from MCDC on the November 2<sup>nd</sup> date on West Side Trail.

#### Programs

Mr. Deegan said they are having a conservation commission round table at Ausbon Sargent the following evening. It is generally a good discussion about what other towns do and is helpful for all who attend.

Chair Brown said he sent a letter around to the Conservation Commission from Northern Pass. Ms. Alexander said it is discussing getting into existing power loops and right-of-ways. She thought the letter was a heads-up on what was coming and that perhaps the Town should put some regulations in place to prohibit Northern Pass from coming into Town. It wasn't believed that the Northern Pass route would come any closer to New London than Franklin.

#### Calendar Events

Mr. Deegan said there is a walk scheduled at Low Plain with Ausbon Sargent in July.

Mr. Stanley said the Elkins Fish & Game Club want to get going on a project fairly soon. He suggested they come up with a design to replace the duck blinds. They have agreed to do so.

Chair Brown said the next meeting is scheduled for April 18 at 2pm. At that meeting they can decide on the meeting schedule for the remainder of the year.

**IT WAS MOVED (Dan Allen) AND SECONDED (Laura Alexander) to adjourn the meeting.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London