

New London Conservation Commission
Minutes of Special Meeting, August 6, 2008

Present: Bob Brown, Dale Conly, Emma Crane, Terry Dancy, Vicki Koron, Les Norman, Ruth White.

Selectmen: Mark Kaplan, Larry Ballin

Staff: Peter Stanley

Guests: Bob Crane, Eric Schultz, Don McGinnis, Sarah Smith

Les Norman called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm

Les Norman stated that the purpose of the meeting was to arrive at a recommendation from the Commission to the Selectmen for the price to be offered to the Schultz's for purchase of the land on Clark Pond. The occasion for this meeting is the receipt of a revised appraisal from Katrina Hill that takes account of the reduced acreage from acreage based on the town tax map, and an increased price per acre resulting from this lower acreage. The new appraisal is \$200,000.

A letter from Michael Todd, a lawyer and neighbor of the Schultz family, to the Board of Selectmen, was circulated. A question was asked about the legal issues raised in the letter. No comments were offered.

Terry Dancy recapitulated comments he had made previously, that the Conservation Commission's biggest argument for making this purchase was that it would be paying a fair price per acre. Dale Conly said that he could support offering the revised appraisal price. Bob Brown said that he could not support offering the original price for a reduced acreage.

Eric Schultz stated that he had anticipated quick closure of this sale after Town Meeting. The extended process is causing him financial hardship. Don McGinnis supported these comments and asked for details of the process that would now lead to completion. Mark Kaplan responded with a summary of the process to date, leading to this negotiation phase. Les Norman suggested that, following agreement at this meeting of a proposed offering price, the selectmen would consider the proposal and make the final offer. Mark Kaplan agreed that this was the procedure that would be followed. Larry Ballin reiterated that we had now entered a phase of negotiation on the price. Don McGinnis asked how long this process would take to reach completion. Larry Ballin said that things would move quickly and that the Selectmen would be prepared to hold a special meeting. Peter Stanley said that his best estimate was that the whole process could be completed within three weeks.

Eric Schultz stated that he felt that consideration should be given to the hardship he was experiencing as a result of the delays in finalizing this negotiation. Les Norman asked whether he had said at our previous meeting that \$220,000 would be an acceptable price. Eric Schultz agreed that this was so. Sarah Smith said that she felt that Eric should receive fair treatment, and consideration for the consequences of delay. Town meeting

had by a large margin supported the purchase of this land. She felt that \$220,000 would be a fair price. Emma Crane said that no more than the appraisal price of \$200,000 was justified.

Terry Dancy then proposed that the Conservation Commission should recommend that the Schultz's be offered \$220,000 for the Clark Pond Property. Dale Conly seconded.

In discussion, Bob Brown asked how the back tax issue on the inflated acreage should be resolved. Eric Schultz said that, assuming \$220,000 was the agreed price, he would not approach the town for repayment of excess back taxes.

The motion was put to the vote. It was approved 5-1.

The meeting adjourned at 1:27 pm.

Submitted by
Les Norman, scribe pro tem