

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2013**



PRESENT: Members – Blake Allison, Matt Stevens, Tom Colgan, Joanna Jaspersohn, Heather Toulmin, Richard Vidal and Lee Larson (Alternate).

PUBLIC: Jay Smith, Chairman Lyme Selectboard

Chair **Blake Allison** called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He appointed Lee as a full voting member for the evening's meeting in place of absent commissioner Russ Hirschler.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 9/09/2013

- On a motion by **Tom**, seconded by **Matt**, the 9/09/2013 minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Post Pond Water Release Policy – Jay Smith** appeared before the Commission to discuss recent events regarding Post Pond and the Chase Ball Field renovation. He said that the NH Dept. of Environmental Services (DES) had sent the Town a letter suspending the permit for the ball field work based on the recent Supreme Court decision that stated DES did not adequately take into account the water release policy on the "total wetland complex." Jay said that DES went on to say that in its opinion "rescinding the water release policy would make that decision moot and allow them to reinstate the permit for the Ball Field." He said that subsequently a DES representative and Pathways Engineer Rod Finley made a site visit and that Rod noted that "with the natural ebb and flow of the pond this summer and water levels occasionally near three feet the ball field drained as the system was designed and would have been playable all summer and should remain so." It was concluded that under those circumstances no policy controlling the pond's water level would be necessary and the current water release policy should be rescinded to bring the Town into compliance with the DES decision. Jay said DES would give a verbal go ahead to finish the remaining 10 days of work on the fields if the Conservation Commission rescinded the water release policy. After discussion, **Tom** moved, and **Matt** seconded, a motion to rescind the water release policy currently in effect based on the recommendations of Pathways Engineer Rod Finley's report. The motion was passed unanimously.
- **Bailey Clay Brook Farmland Protection – Blake** said he had received in late September an e-mail from Sara Cavin, Conservation Project Manager at the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT), regarding the proposed conservation of approximately 60 acres at the north corner of NH Rt. 10 and Whipple Hill Rd. At that time, the Dan Bailey family had owned the property. Lee reported that in the intervening time the land had been purchased from the Bailey's by David Roby's Bear Hill Conservancy group. He said Robey's plan was to conserve the land through the UVLT and then try to resell it. In an e-mail Cavin said the UVLT to date had received 50% of needed funding and hoped to raise additional funds through grants and private donations to complete the purchase while also creating a stewardship fund to help maintain the property and defray associated legal costs. Lee moved, and Tom seconded, a motion to write UVLT a letter expressing the commission's interest in supporting the project.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Hewes Brook Landing Maintenance Reimbursement – Lee** noted that every year the Snelling family voluntarily maintains the Hewes Brook boat launch parking area. He said the Commission in the past had reimbursed them for expenses associated with their work. **Tom** moved, and **Matt** seconded, a motion to reimburse the Snellings \$100 for expenses associated with their work, with the funds drawn from the Maintenance and Management of Town Conservation Areas Fund. It passed unanimously.
- **Trout Pond Timber Harvest – Blake** said he had no update from **Ben Hudson** regarding scheduling a timber harvest in the forest.
- **Clay Brook Beaver Pipe Removal Follow Up – Blake** presented a letter from NH DES dated 9/27/13 stating that based on their Administrative Review no further action is required regarding a 2010 DES order that the beaver deceivers be removed due to lack of proper permitting. The DES letter said the case was closed. **Lee** asked if the culverts and cages might be re-used, and discussion followed. The six culverts are to be stored at **Richard's** for later use, and **Lee** will offer the cages to Ben Kilham if he will remove them.
- **Fall Trail Clean Up – Heather** reported the NH Rt. 10 end of the Big Rock trail was deeply eroded and needed both water diversion and tread way repair. **Tom** moved and **Joanna** seconded, a motion to provide up to \$150 from the Maintenance and Management of Town Conservation Areas Fund for water diversion materials that Richard will install help. It passed unanimously.
- **UVLT Clay Brook Trail Maintenance – Blake** said that UVLT Stewardship Coordinator Jason Berard had been in touch with him about maintenance that was performed on the Clay Brook Trail. In the course of that work Jason made several recommendations about improvements that could be made where the trail joins the Lyme Town Forest's western trailhead. Based on Lee's favorable comments regarding Jason's proposal, Blake gave a go ahead, and the work was completed in late September.
- **Grant Brook Bank Stabilization Follow Up -- Matt** reported he had helped Grant Brook abutter Paul Guyre create a bank stabilization revetment with the installation of 20 Christmas trees using duckbill anchors. The site is a Grant Brook riverbank segment just downstream from NH Rt. 10 and the Big Rock Preserve.

4. Project and Application Review

- **No Items Submitted**

5. Outreach and Education

- **Presentation at Lyme Converse Free Library – No action taken.**

6. Other Business

- **2014 Conservation Commission Budget**– **Lee** motioned, and **Joanna** seconded, that the **Commission** submit to the Select Board a proposed 2014 budget based on funding levels equal to the 2013 budget. It passed unanimously.

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News** – No actions Taken

Due to a power failure and loss of lights, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

The next scheduled Conservation Commission meeting is on Monday, November 4 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lyme Center Academy building.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Toulmin, Secretary *pro tem* and Blake Allison, Secretary *emeritus*