

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2016**



Present: Blake Allison (Chair), Joanna Jaspersohn (Alternate), Russell Hirschler (Vice-chair) Lee Larson (Alternate), James Monroe, Meg Sheehan, Jay Smith (Select Board Rep.) and Matt Stevens,

Blake called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He appointed Lee as a full voting member for the night's meeting.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2016-04-04

- On a motion by **Matt**, seconded by **Meg**, the April meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC) Easement Divestiture** – **Jay** reported that in the course of a discussion with the CRWC regarding TransCanada's dam relicensing filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), CRWC had raised the possibility of Lyme taking on some conservation easements it holds in Lyme. **Lee** expressed concern about the Town taking on more easements. He noted Lyme currently holds 30 easements. Adding more would require finding additional easement monitors. Also, he noted, should the easement land owner violate the contract's terms, the Town would be obligated to pursue enforcement perhaps including legal action.

Meg asked whether some of the properties in question might be worth taking on to ensure they are protected and whether a mechanism could be worked out with CRWC for establishing some kind of stewardship funding and oversight. She and **Joanna** said they would attend the Select Board May 4 meeting with the CRWC at the Town Office.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Holt's Ledge Intrusion** – **Matt** reported that someone has been constructing an unauthorized climbing course at Holt's Ledge. He said bolts have been driven into the rock face. Questions were raised regarding how close the course was to the nesting peregrine falcon site and what landowners might be involved. **Matt** said it appears most of the work was occurring on Dartmouth College property, but he did not rule out that Lyme's Holt's holdings might also be involved. **Lee** offered to create an overlay map showing the Holt's topography relative to property lines. He and **Matt** agreed to go out there with a GPS survey to establish whether Lyme's property is involved. **Matt** also noted Dartmouth is aware of the problem but did not know what redress they might seek with the individual(s) involved.

Trails and Land Management, cont.

- **Invasive Terrestrial Species Action Plan – Blake** raised the issue of establishing clear priorities for addressing terrestrial invasive species issues during the upcoming spring/summer season. He proposed going after Japanese knotweed at two sites: Hewes Brook downstream from the bridge and The Chaffee Sanctuary where its property abuts Nancy Wray's. It was agreed those were good choices and that herbicide applied by "painting" the cut stems would be the most effective application. It also was agreed to wait until June when the foliage is more developed before proceeding.
- **"Trails Day" Saturday, June 4 – Blake** reminded everyone that this year's outing was fast approaching. He asked for volunteers to survey the town's trail network and that any issues found be reported to him via e-mail by Sunday, May 29. Work on June 4 could then be prioritized. **Lee** said he would take Trout Pond. **Blake** said he would cover the Western Town Forest Trail. **Meg** said she would walk The Ledge Trail and **James** said he would survey the Lower Grant Brook Trail.
- **Chaffee Wildlife Viewing Blind Update – Russ** said the Tuesday, April 26 snow had thwarted plans to finish up the blind, but he expected to be out there on May 3 with his colleague John Taylor to finish up the project.

4. Project and Application Review

- **No Items Submitted.**

5. Outreach and Education

- **NH Wildlife Action Plan Seminar Follow Up –** Nothing reported.
- **Western Town Forest Vernal Pool Hike Report – Lee & Meg** said the event was well attended with perhaps 20 people participating. They said Jim Kennedy did a first rate job as guide.
- **Saturday, May 7: "Green Up Day" and "Lyme Day of Service" Update – Blake** said sign up was going well and it looked as if the Town's major roads would have litter patrol teams working them. He observed that the coincidental occurrence of "Lyme's Day of Service" project was contributing to increased awareness about "Green Up Day."

6. Other Business

- **Little Town Common Landscaping Update – Blake** said he had been talking with Heritage Commission members Jane Fant and Tim Cook about developing a landscaping plan for the strip of land that separates Little Town Common from the Lyme School parking area. He said the favored proposal is for a granite post fence paralleling the school's boundary. This would be fronted on the Common's side with plantings, either hydrangeas or lilacs. Blake said it was agreed the need for maintenance would be kept to a minimum and that the project would be privately funded.

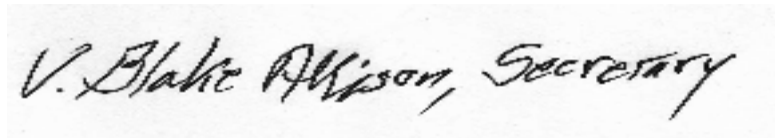
7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item:** Blake said he would submit a "Trails Day" announcement.

8. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Blake Allison, Secretary". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

V. Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 6 beginning 7:00 p.m. at the Lyme Center Academy Building