

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2014**



MEMBERS PRESENT: Blake Allison, Russell Hirschler, Lee Larson, Matt Stevens and Sue MacKenzie

PUBLIC PRESENT: MaryBeth Keifer and James Munroe

**** Public Hearing on Conservation Fund Withdrawal ****

The hearing was called to take public comment on the Commission's plan to withdraw funds from the Conservation Fund to be used to pay several outstanding debts that could not otherwise be paid, because the money normally allocated for those uses in the "Maintenance and Management" section of the Commission's 2014 budget had been exhausted. Blake called the hearing to order at 7:05 p.m. With no public present to comment, he adjourned the hearing at 7:10 p.m.

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. Blake named Lee a full voting member.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 8/04/2014 and 09/08/2014

- On a motion by **Lee**, seconded by **Russ**, the 2014-08-04 CC Minutes were passed unanimously. No vote was taken on the 2014-09-08 Minutes, because the meeting was not held due to a lack of a quorum. **Blake** said he would submit minutes noting for the record that the meeting was not held.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Robinson Conservation Easement Update** – **Lee** reported that the matter had been settled. According to a lawyer for the Society for Protection of NH Forests, the issue was classified as a "boundary clarification" that needed no change to the conservation easement (see 2014-08-04 CC Minutes).

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Chaffee/Town Beach Connecting Trail and Bridge Update** – **Blake** reported that the project was completed and proving very popular with users. **Russ** said he too had received very positive feedback. During ensuing discussion it was agreed that for next season signage should be added, re-vegetation should be assessed, cobbling should be placed underneath the Chase Beach side sill and the trail leading from the Chase parking lot to the bridge should be improved.
- **Create Invasive Species Management Plan?** – **Sue** noted the growing issue of terrestrial invasives on Town lands and along roadways. She urged that a comprehensive plan be developed for controlling and/or eradicating them. **Matt** commented that any such plan should establish a clear goal and scope of activity to implement it. **Blake** said he would contact the NH Association of Conservation Commissions to find out what resources were available and what other towns had done.

Trails and Land Management, cont

- **Blow Downs (2) on “Waterfall Trail”** – **Blake** said Clover Mill Ln. resident MaryBeth Keifer had reported two “blow downs” on the Town Forest’s lower Waterfall Trail. Lee said he and Peter McGowan would go investigate to see what action was needed.
- **Conservation Fund Appropriation for Various Maintenance Projects** – On a unanimous vote with Russ abstaining, the Commission voted to withdraw money from the Conservation Fund to pay for 2014 maintenance projects as follows:
 - To Alfred Balch for Chaffee mowing: \$448 from the Fund’s “Chaffee Mowing Fund,”
 - To the Snelling family: \$100 for Hewes Brook Boat Launch mowing and maintenance.
 - To the Upper Valley Trails Alliance: \$500 for two days work on the Chaffee Bridge project.

4. Project and Application Review

- **River Road Site Visit** – **Blake** said that Sue, Lee, Russ and he inspected the area where the Town was proposing to fix a significant subsidence of the roadway. Sue said the permitting process had been suspended, because an engineering assessment concluded the riverbank would not support the proposed remedy.
- **Schedule Site Visit at 201 Dorchester Rd.** – **Blake** said the visit had been requested to assess the impact of a proposed deck addition to the house. All the work would take place in a wetland buffer.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Lyme School Nature Study Area Update** – **Blake** reported that school Principal Jeff Valance said the project was moving forward. The neighbors who objected to aspects of the plan decided not to appeal the NH DES decision to issue a permit approving the project. **Lee** noted that the current budget has a \$200 appropriation for “Education (line 357)” and asked whether that might be donated to the school for work done in conjunction with the “Nature Study Area” program. **Blake** said he would discuss the matter with Jeff and solicit proposals.

6. Other Business

- **2015 Budget Review** – **Blake** asked for comment on a proposed Town funded budget for the coming year. After some discussion it was agreed to ask for \$325 to pay Conservation Commission dues, a \$15 increase, and \$1050 for Maintenance and Management projects, a \$50 increase. That would bring the total 2015 budget request to \$2100. **Lee** moved and **Russ** seconded that the request be submitted to the Select Board. It passed unanimously.
- **NHDES Volunteer Lake Assessment Program Results** – **Blake** said the results of last summer’s testing were available and that no problems were reported.

Other Business, cont.

- **New Commission Members – Blake** introduced MaryBeth Keifer and James Munroe who had volunteered to serve on the Commission. There was general discussion about the Conservation Commission's duties. MaryBeth and James said they were interested in contributing to the Town and presented relevant experience. On a unanimous vote it was agreed to send their candidacies to the Select Board with an affirmative recommendation. James would serve as a full, voting member, and MaryBeth, per her request, would serve as an alternate.

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item?** – **Blake** said he would submit notes on hiking safely during hunting season.

8. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will take place on Monday, November 3 at the Lyme Academy Building beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*