



**Lyme Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 7, at 7:00 p.m.  
Lyme Center Academy Building**

The meeting was conducted in person and via Zoom in accordance with New Hampshire's "right to know" statutes.

CC Attendance in Person: Blake Allison (Chair and Secretary *pro tem*), Lin Brown, Sue McKenzie, Matt Stevens, Tom Colgan Jill Niles (Alternate), Meg Sheehan and David Lysy (Alternate)

CC Attendance via Zoom: Ann Flood, Sara Zahendra (Alternate) and Rebecca Hanissian (Alternate)

Public via Zoom: Robin Model-Lornitzo

Chair Allison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2022-01-03 Meeting**

On a motion from Tom, seconded by Jill, the minutes of the January meeting were passed unanimously on a roll call vote. Ann abstained. She was not present at the meeting.

**2. Land Protection and Easements**

- **Post Pond Eurasian Milfoil Control Program Update** – Sue reported she had positive feedback regarding her posting seeking volunteers to work on a Eurasian milfoil hand pulling program for Post Pond. She plans to schedule a meeting to introduce the project.
- **Funding for 2022 Post Pond Milfoil Treatment** – On a motion by Sue, seconded by Tom, the Commission voted by a unanimous roll call vote, to appropriate from the Conservation Fund the amount of \$16,167 for Post Pond's 2022 Eurasian milfoil treatment as requested in Article 11 of Lyme's Annual Town Meeting Warrant.
- **LBWG Update** – Meg said that the LBWG is scheduled to hold its first 2022 meeting on Monday, March 14 to start planning for its annual Japanese knotweed eradication program. She said an intern had been hired and hopes a second one can be retained too. She also expressed hope that outreach to volunteers could be restored to its pre Covid-19 levels. She said that the LBWG will again be seeking funding from the Lyme Foundation and hoped the Conservation Commission would as in the past match any grant money received.
- **Town Forest Conservation Easement** – Blake raised the issue of reopening discussion about putting a conservation easement on the Town Forest. He noted that development pressure is increasing throughout the Upper Valley and that there is no guarantee it always would be protected without one. After some discussion it was agreed that Commission members should reflect on what is important to them about the Town Forest and its uses. It was also noted that



### **Town Forest Conservation Easement, cont.**

building consensus amongst Lyme residents would be important too. Blake said that the forthcoming revision of the Town Forest management plan would provide opportunities to address these concerns.

He also reported he had been in contact with the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) regarding what establishing an easement would entail. He said he had received from the UVLT a document outlining steps necessary for creating an easement and said he would distribute it to Commission membership.

### **3. Trails and Land Management**

- **Possible Land Addition to Town Forest** – Blake said that Otford resident Pat Tullar had approached Ben Kilham to find out whether the Conservation Commission was interested in purchasing a 60-acre parcel of land he owns abutting the Forest's northwest corner. Blake said he had not met yet with Tullar and recommended further discussion be tabled until more information could be gathered.

### **4. Project and Application Review**

- **No Items Submitted**

### **5. Outreach and Education**

- **Lyme Salamander Crossing Brigade** – Sara said she had been in discussion with St. Francis Wild Bird Hospital owner Catherine Greenleaf regarding whether the Conservation Commission would like to become more involved her amphibian rescue plan that Catherine that she has been overseeing. Sara explained that on early spring nights when weather conditions are rainy and the temperature reaches into the 40s, frogs and salamanders begin migrating from their overwintering sites to their breeding grounds, i.e., vernal pools, ponds and wetlands. Unfortunately, she observed, this movement often takes them across roadways which puts the in danger of being run over. The crossing brigades are set up to help the amphibians to safely cross the road. There was general agreement that such a program has merit but there also was concurrence that the Commission's role should be limited to promotional and educational activities in order to limit its exposure to potential liability resulting from hosting crossing sights. Sara volunteered to lead effort and said she would develop an announcement for the Lyme Listserv and the Commission's Facebook page.

### **6. Other Business**

- **"Right to Know" Follow Up** – Ann reported she had tried to follow up with the NH Municipal Association (NHMA) seeking more clarity regarding the state "right to know" law but had not received a sufficiently satisfactory explanation. She said the NHMA's guidelines seem to be at odds with those put forth by the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. She recommended that the Commission follow the NHACC's recommendations since they were more aware of the nature of the activities and responsibilities of a Conservation Commission and were properly respectful of the right to know in matters of public access to its activities.



- **Funding for Reservoir Pond Dam Repair** – Blake opened a discussion about a request from the “Friends of Reservoir Pond” seeking a Conservation Commission donation to help fund a state mandated repair of the dam. The “Friends” that said the estimated repair cost is \$250,000 and, that if the repairs were not made, the State of NH order that the dam be breached. “Friends” representative Robin Model-Lornitzo said the pond was an important recreational resource for the community and a magnet for wildlife.

Commission members raised some concerns. First, shouldn’t a conservation commission’s focus be on restoring ecosystems rather than perpetuating disruptive ones as dams are known to do? Also, given that the Conservation Commission is being asked to contribute public funds, what are the benefits to the larger public beyond those for the abutting property owners?

The Commission’s consensus was that a site visit should be the next step in order to gain a better understanding of the “facts on the ground” about the dam and its place in the surrounding ecosystem.

## 7. Publicity

- Blake will supply an article for the April/May Lyme Community & Church News

## 8. Adjournment

On motion by Tom, seconded by Sue, Chair Allison adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "V. Blake Allison, Secretary". The handwriting is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Blake Allison, Chair and Secretary *pro tem*

The next meeting of the Lyme Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, April 4, 2022 at the Lyme Center Academy Building beginning 7 p.m.