



**Lyme Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.  
Lyme Center Academy Building**

Attendance: Blake Allison (Chair), Lin Brown, Sue McKenzie (Vice Chair), Matt Stevens, Tom Colgan, Meg Sheehan, Ann Flood. (Secretary), Sara Zahendra (alternate), Jill Kearney (alternate), David Lysy (alternate). (With a quorum of regular members being present, all votes noted below were from regular members only.)

Public: Jaxon Morgan (attended via Zoom to participate in the report from LBWG)

The Chair (Blake) called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2022-4-04 Meeting**

On a motion from Sue and second from Lin, the minutes from the April meeting were accepted unanimously by roll call, with 3 abstentions (Blake, Ann and Meg) due to their being absent from the April meeting.

**2. Land Protection and Easements**

- **Post Pond Milfoil Monitoring Program update– Sue**

- About 15 volunteers showed up for the April training session, including several scuba divers at least some of whom were trained in milfoil removal. Another half dozen people told her they were interested in volunteering but could not attend the training session in April. There is a rule that only scuba divers could pull or mark milfoil even in shallow area (safety issue) but will explore if there can be any exceptions so that others can help. Other tasks such as boat transportation, coordination exist. A kiosk with information about milfoil and how to protect Post Pond was suggested too, with volunteers to help build it along the lines of other signage in the State about milfoil. Anticipated costs for all these activities this year would be around \$2K. (Sue distributed a brochure that was handed out at the training session.)
- Ann moved (Jill seconded) that the Conservation Commission (CC) provide \$2K for the purpose of setting up a Lyme-based Milfoil Monitoring Program and initiating its use and educational signage. It passed unanimously by roll call vote.
- Sue will follow up with the Select Board for permission to use Town land for the kiosk.

- **Lyme Biodiversity Working Group — Meg and Jaxon**

- Meg and Jaxon reported on the current progress and status of the LBWG's efforts. They have completed five years and the 3-year funding period to remove invasives from Big Rock Trail. Along with the CC in Vermont they are reapplying for another three years of funding from Lyme Foundation and have a private donation of \$5K. They have identified three Hanover High student volunteers (all from Norwich) to help restore native species and pull invasives expanding the scope at Big Rock to include honeysuckle, burning bush, and bittersweet in addition to knotweed. Jaxon clarified that they only pull weeds; they do not



use chemicals. Trying to reinvigorate HyperTherm's involvement. They are requesting \$4500 over the three years from the CC. Tom moved to allocate \$4500 from the CC over three years to support the LBWG's efforts. David seconded the motion. It passed unanimously on a roll call vote with Meg abstaining due to conflict of interest.

- **Town Easements and proposed additions—Blake and Tom**

- Blake announced that he would like to postpone discussion of Lyme's potential of a new conservation easement for the Town Forest (i.e., reopening discussion about putting a conservation easement on the Town Forest; additionally, Orford resident Pat Tullar approached Ben Kilham early this year to find out whether the CC was interested in purchasing a 60-acre parcel of land he owns abutting the Forest's northwest corner). Discussion would occur at the next meeting in which Town Forester Jeff Smith could participate. Blake had been in touch with Jeff about the proposal and hoped he might show us the property so that we could all have some direct appreciation of it. There was no objection to Blake's request. However, Tom requested, since he could not attend the June meeting, that he be allowed to make a brief presentation regarding the differences in scope, permanence, and costs between taking on an easement and taking on a management plan for the property.
- Tom then described that an *easement proposal* for the Town would become a permanent document, i.e., essentially not modifiable once approved and requiring the State's Attorney General to modify. This document begins with an affirmation that the owner (the Town in this case) is retaining all its rights except for those specifically restricted in the easement. The easement document specifies: (a) activities/uses that will not be permitted, e.g., no developments or structures, no horses on trails and (b), for clarification and affirmation of those rights that will remain but are not limited to, a general description of what activities/uses are intended to be allowed now and in perpetuity, e.g., timber harvesting, recreational uses by the people of the Town, or hunting or fishing. An easement will typically require a management plan be in place and updated every so many years. The Management Plan is a dynamic document; it evolves and changes over time but still must abide by the restrictions and affirmative rights in the easement. Placing an easement on the Town forest property requires a legal document that would be drafted by legal counsel. The property management plan is usually created by a credentialed expert(s) in land management. Tom said he thought there is enough money in the conservation fund to cover drafting an easement document for the Town forest. The current management plan needs to be updated and the funds to do this work have traditionally come from the conservations fund. Undertaking a project to place an easement on the Town forest would take considerable time and likely cost between \$25-\$50,000. It might be helpful to get a sense, if possible, on how the Town residents would feel about an easement before embarking on this project. Keep in mind that the majority of conservation easements are placed on property where the landowner receives compensation for encumbering their property with an easement. This would not be the case if a conservation easement was placed on the Town property.
- Blake announced that Ann volunteered to run our easement monitoring program for 2022. We are going to need a few property monitors. James Munroe did almost 20 of them for 2021 and Blake did the remainder; however, this is not feasible going forward. Matt volunteered to do at least one of the properties that James had done, and Lin volunteered to help on one or more monitoring of properties.



- *Per an email distributed earlier to the CC by Blake and announced at the meeting:* The Conservation Land Stewardship (CLS) Program is planning a Field Visit to our Land Conservation Investment Program (LCIP) conservation properties over the course of two days during the week of June 20, 21, 22, 23. They encourage as many town officials to join them as would like, for this learning opportunity. Due to the large number of LCIP properties in Lyme, they asked us to *select one or two conservation properties we would like then to visit with us*, for example, properties where we have questions or concerns about or properties with boundary or encroachment issues. They request us to send the names of those properties and at least two dates and times when we are available within the timeframes above, and they will try to schedule their visits for that time.
- As detailed on the CLS website and discussed briefly at the meeting, most LCIP properties are encumbered by conservation easements which are held in Grantee interest by Towns in NH. Each municipality is responsible for monitoring, managing, and recordkeeping for its LCIP properties.

### 3. Trails and Land Management

- **Report on Trail Work – Matt**

A team of CC members started re-painting the boundary line of Trout Pond Forest. Tom cleared a path (work-around) around the fallen tree on the Waterfall Trail mentioned in the April CC meeting minutes. Members reported no problems on the trails they reviewed, except Matt commented that the trail at the Big Rock itself needs repair. There is ample opportunity for volunteer work; anyone interested can contact the Conservation Commission or Matt specifically. Blake has paint for trailblazing if needed.

### 4. Project and Application Review

No items

### 5. Outreach and Education

- **“Green Up Day” will be on Saturday, May 7** – Blake said he again was coordinating the day’s activity with CommunityCare of Lyme’s (CCL) “Day of Service.” Sign up online using either CCL’s website or by using the Conservation Commission’s inbox or at the Welcome table at the Lyme School beginning at 8:30 a.m.
- **Salamander (and other amphibians) brigade.** Sara said she participated in one of the evenings of alerts for high migration and helped several salamanders and amphibians cross the road safely. She mentioned trying to add more outreach for the Salamander brigade, e.g., a photo of a kid with a saved salamander in the paper or newsletters or the email alerts, to encourage community enthusiasm and buy-in similar to the Turtle crossings.



**6. Other Business**

**No items Submitted**

**7. Publicity**

- Blake will supply an article for the next Lyme Community & Church News.

**8. Adjournment**

On a motion from Sue and second from Lin, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Barry Flood". The signature is written in a fluid, connected style.

Ann Barry Flood, Secretary

The next meeting of the Lyme Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, June 6, 2022 at the Lyme Center Academy Building beginning 7 p.m.