

**Lyme Conservation Commission  
Minutes  
December 7, 2015**



Present: Blake Allison (Chair), Lee Larson (Alternate), Russell Hirschler, MaryBeth Kiefer (Alternate), James Munroe, Meg Sheehan (Alternate), Ian Smith (Alternate), Jay Smith (Select Board Rep.) and Matt Stevens

Blake called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and appointed Lee and Meg as regular voting members for the evening.

**1. Review and Approve Minutes from 2015-11-02**

- On a motion by **Matt**, seconded by **James**, the November minutes were accepted unanimously.

**2. Land Protection and Easements**

- **No items submitted**

**3. Trails and Land Management**

- **Chaffee Wildlife Viewing Blind Update – Russell** gave a status report on work to date and plans for the remainder of the season. The intent, he said, is to get the walls closed in and a roof on. He and John Taylor hope to get out this week.

**4. Project and Application Review**

- **No Items Submitted.**

**5. Outreach and Education**

- **Big Rock Outdoor Classroom Update – Blake** reviewed matters pertaining to the project. Lyme resident Tom Frawley had raised concerns about the “classroom” with Lyme Police Chief Shaun O’Keefe pertaining to the structures, the fire pit and a latrine. Blake said he visited the site shortly thereafter and then contacted 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade teacher Trisha Shipman about the issues raised. It was agreed the original “Memo of Understanding” should be revised to take latrine into account. Blake said he had written Police Chief O’Keefe and the Mr. Frawley addressing the concerns raised noting that the structures would come down at the academic year’s end as part of the project’s “leave no trace” program, that the fire pit had been approved by Town Fire Warden Don Elder and that the latrine was sited by an Eagle Scout. Blake said Chief O’Keefe was satisfied matters were being addressed. Mr. Frawley continued to question whether a “classroom” was an appropriate use of conserved land.

There was unanimous agreement among Commission members that the program’s actions were consistent with its stated intent and were part of the education process. Blake noted that Mr. Frawley had offered to speak to the class on the topic of responsible forest usage. It was agreed Blake should pass that information on to Trisha and let her decide whether such a presentation would be beneficial. Also, Trisha is working on signage.

## 6. Other Business

- **Trout Unlimited In-classroom Program – Matt** noted that Trout Unlimited has kits for raising brook trout in a classroom setting and suggested it might be a good program for a Lyme School class. He thought the kit might be about \$200, including a tank and water chiller. It was agreed the program was worth pursuing. Matt said he would investigate further to confirm the program's particulars.
- **Stream Habitat Assessment/improvement Discussion – Matt** suggested it would be worthwhile checking the Town's culverts and bridges to see whether water flow through and under them respectively could be optimized for the benefit of aquatic organisms such as brook trout. As those structures are replaced, he asked, could culvert diameter be increased where needed to benefit habitat? Jay noted that state mandated regulations affecting culverts had increased replacement costs significantly creating a larger financial burden for the town. Matt observed that some water flow enhancements could be done with little expense and cited a culvert on Market Street as an example. It was agreed an inventory of culverts and bridges would be a useful first step.
- **Report on New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) Annual Meeting – Meg** attended the November 7 meeting and gave a report on her activities there. She said she attended three workshops (see below) and distributed a variety of documents she had collected.
  - **NH Wildlife Action Plan 2015 Maps and Data.** Here is a link if people want to find out more: <http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/wap-using-maps.html>
  - **Trends in conservation easements on Town Forests**
  - **Conservation Easements: common stewardship scenarios and easement interpretation**

## 7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News Item** – Apropos the above discussion about publicity for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade "Big Rock" outdoor classroom program, **Blake** reported that **Matt** had been working with Trisha to produce a piece for the upcoming "Lyme Community and Church News."

## 8. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*

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