

**Lyme Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2014**



PRESENT: Members – Blake Allison, Russell Hirshler, Tom Colgan, Joanna Jaspersohn, Lee Larson (Alternate), Sue McKenzie (Select Board Rep.), Matt Stevens and Heather Toulmin

Blake called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Review and Approve Minutes from 3/03/2014 and 4/07/2014

- On a motion by **Russ**, seconded by **Matt**, the meeting minutes of 3/03/2014 and 4/07/2014 were approved unanimously.

2. Land Protection and Easements

- **Stanhope Route 10 Parcel** – **Blake** said John Stanhope told him he had some preliminary discussion with a conservation group about selling a conservation easement on his property on NH Rt. 10 near Goose Pond Road. Blake observed its Hewes Brook frontage might make it of interest.

3. Trails and Land Management

- **Trails Day Project? Big Rock Trail Relocation** – **Heather** reported that bank erosion had caused a small section of the trail to collapse. She said she and her family re-routed it. She noted some boards needed to be replaced and there were areas needing re-vegetation. This spurred a conversation about projects to take on for “Trails Day” on Saturday, June 7. After some discussion, it was agreed all the Town’s trails should be viewed and assessed before making a final determination at the Commission’s June 2 meeting.
- **Chaffee/Town Beach Connecting Trail and Bridge** – There was agreement to move the project forward and that a potential site should be found for the bridge. It was agreed this should be done with the Recreation Commission’s input. **Heather** said she would contact the Rec Comm. to schedule a site visit.
- **Post Pond Issues** – **Blake** said Loch Lyme Lodge’s Jay Kelly had contacted him reporting evidence that beavers have returned to the area, and was the Commission going to address the issue of the pond’s water level. It was noted that with the Town’s water release policy voided the water level would rise and fall through natural causes whether due to beaver activity or weather. In a related matter it was noted the pond’s water level stake needed re-setting. **Matt and Blake** said they would do that.

Trails and Land Management, cont.

- **Milfoil Control Donation? – Blake** re-opened discussion about making a contribution from the Conservation Fund. There was some discussion about the dollar amount and establishing guidelines for accessing the Fund. **Russell** offered the following motion seconded by **Tom**: “That the Conservation Commission establish a policy that would allow using up to 5% of the Conservation Fund for non-easement purchase, conservation-related projects on an annual basis as long as the Fund balance is a minimum of \$150,000. Funds would be dispensed at Commission’s discretion subject to a public hearing.” The motion passed unanimously.

Matt then moved that the Commission contribute to the Town from the Conservation Fund the sum of \$7,500 for milfoil eradication during the calendar year of 2014. **Joanna** seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Location/Tasks for Trail Corps program in July – Russ** asked the Commission to establish a date and project for the student group that has been made available by the Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) to work on a conservation project in Lyme. There was consensus the above mentioned connector bridge project should be the priority with the possibility, if time allowed, of building a wildlife observation blind in The Chaffee.

4. Project and Application Review

- **Carol Barr/301 River Road: River Bank Stabilization – Blake** said this proposed project would involve adding additional stone to an existing riprap, anti-erosion bulwark. No heavy machinery would be used. **Lee** asked whether the project had received appropriate permitting. **Blake** said he did not know but would check with Dave Robbins and let people know. He also said he would contact people about a site visit.
- **Robert Thebodo/13 Creamery Lane: Wetlands Conservation District Variance – Blake** said this proposed project would involve constructing a solar panel array in the Wetlands Conservation District requiring a “special exception” from the ZBA.

5. Outreach and Education

- **Lyme School Playground Renovation – Heather** said the Playground Committee had received a grant of \$750 to help with its plan to make an adjacent wetland more “bird friendly” by putting up nesting boxes and adding plantings to improve the area’s habitat.
- **“Green Up Day” Follow Up -- Blake** said the day was a success with teams out on almost all of the town’s major roads. He said preliminary reports indicated a larger than normal amount of litter had been collected. He said a final tally would be made available later in the month.

6. Other Business

- **Firewood Assistance Program Update – Blake** said he had traded e-mails with Dan Freihofer, head of the Alan Hewitt Fund Firewood Program, who expressed an interest in sourcing wood from town properties to supply the program.

7. Publicity

- **Lyme Community and Church News – Blake** said he would submit a “Green Up Day” recap as well as a notice seeking “Trails Day” volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 2 at 7:00 pm at the Lyme Center Academy Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Allison, Secretary *pro tem*