



**Lyme Conservation Commission (CC)
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Lyme Center Academy Building**

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

CC Attendance in Person: Blake Allison (Chair), Sue MacKenzie (Vice-Chair), Ann Flood (Secretary), Matt Stevens, Tom Colgan, Lin Brown, David Lysy (alternate), Sara Zahendra (appt voting), Jill Kearney (alternate)

Members joining by zoom: none

Public joining in person: James (Jim) Mason (kiosk builder for Post Pond)

The Chair (Blake) called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Other Business

• **Various Post Pond matters**

As a courtesy to Jim Mason who was invited to meet with the CC and update them regarding the status of the kiosk and proposals for its use, Blake began the meeting by thanking James for all his efforts to create the new kiosk at Post Pond and inviting him to update us on it, its planned uses, and miscellaneous issues on the Pond. Jim described the kiosk status briefly and noted that there is an unusually high tannic acid coloring the Pond this year, due presumably to an historic flow into and out of the Pond due to storms. In addition to storms affecting flow, weeds like duck weed at the outflow slow down removal of water. There was some discussion about die-offs at the west end of the Pond perhaps due to chemicals. Tom cautioned against moving too quickly to identify chemicals as the cause since that is not the only reason for die-offs, and it takes a lot of chemicals to create a die-off.

Jim credited and thanked Sue for all her efforts to organize the extraction of milfoil. He mentioned that the new kiosk could be used to educate people about what milfoil was, why it is important to control including the removal and avoidance of transfer of fragments. He said that the public turnout to help with the milfoil was rather meager/disappointing despite Sue's many efforts and that new methods to encourage community ownership of the Pond might help. He suggested that a 'Friends of Post Pond' group could be formed, either under the aegis of the CC or independent of it or any official Town group. Having a group with periodic meetings and actions could add gravity to keeping the Pond 'healthy' and safe; its actions could be helpful to draw others in, e.g., in addition to milfoil removal, it could propose speed or boat safety regulations.

General discussion ensued. Sue mentioned that it would be good to open up the 'friends' to include non-residents since others like Post Pond. She mentioned the helpfulness of the people from Mascoma Lake who were in the fortunate position of not having much milfoil to control in their pond. Other ideas were to encourage people to be on top of milfoil fragment collection.



- **Various Post Pond matters, continued**

People who live on the periphery of the Pond are already motivated and alert to showing divers where they are needed and extracting stragler weeds. A question was raised about the possibility of joining the NH Lakes Association. It was noted that, although a very good non-profit group to consider, there was a fee to join ranging from \$100 to \$1000 depending on level (<https://nhlakes.org/wp-content/uploads/Association-Partnership-Form-2022.pdf>). A suggestion was made to Jim to consider forming a 501c3 foundation of our own. It requires an annual report that is not onerous to complete and has the advantage of qualifying for many grants; it can mean donations to it are tax-deductible (as permitted by IRS regulations and only if you itemize).

Members of the CC again thanked Jim for his efforts to help Post Pond; he left at 7:23.

- **Proposal of support for Jim's materials and expenses for the kiosk**

Note: Sara was appointed a voting member for the remainder of the meeting.

- After Jim left, Blake asked for a sense of the CC and a motion to reimburse Jim for his expenditures per earlier emails. After some discussion, Tom moved that we appropriate funds as indicated in an email from Jim and the additional support to cover use of his truck as in an email from Blake. The amount was \$784.61 in itemized expenses and \$300 in truck and shop expenses=\$1084.61. Lin seconded it and it passed on roll call unanimously. Blake noted that the original estimate had been \$2000, so this came in under the estimated amount.

2. Review and Approve Minutes from 2023-06-05 Meeting

- On a motion from Tom, seconded by Sue the minutes of the 2023-06-05 meeting as distributed were passed unanimously on a roll call vote. (Members who were not present at the meeting abstained.)

3. Land Protection and Easements

- **Forest Management Plans Update – Ecological Assessment Proposal**

Blake noted that a link to the report on forest management was sent out a few weeks ago (see also reports sent in March and earlier on proposals for Town forest management). Blake mentioned that he is obtaining a copy for the Select Board and Converse Library of the 18 page executive summary. He would still like to followup on getting a conservation easement on the Town Forest but this needs to be 'sold' to the town members in advance of a Town Meeting to get approval for it.

The purpose of the easement would be to ensure that it could not be further developed in the future; it is not per se about management, like having a no-cut strategy. However, to get to an understandable and viable easement (which cannot be easily changed going forward), it is useful/necessary to have an assessment of what the Town Forest's boundaries are and an ecological assessment of what is there; a management plan would be helpful, especially to define the broad uses that would be permitted in an easement. In recent months, we have solicited a proposal for management but received one too oriented toward harvesting trees.



- **Forest Management Plans Update – Ecological Assessment Proposal, continued**

Another ecologically oriented proposal was received but it was focused on what had been done for Hanover’s forests as an example of what could be done for Lyme and it was not site-specific. There was discussion about whether there is a standard for what is needed so that we can describe better what we want to see from potential contractors. There was discussion about Mud Turtle Pond road which is a class VI road but not maintained by the Town even for emergency needs to get to the Boy Scout camp, etc.

Blake asked for a sense of the CC members that he should reengage natural resource specialist Rick Van de Poll to get an ecological assessment done so that we can, later, proceed to a management plan that is in preparation for seeking an easement. The sense of the CC was to agree. Tom noted that a ecological assessment is not the same thing as looking at how the forest has changed since the last Baseline report in 2007; since ‘nothing’ has been done since then to manage it, we could use this opportunity to assess changes that occurred in the absence of management.

Sue moved that the CC should authorize Blake to re-initiate plans to get Rick to do an ecological assessment of the Town Forest, along the lines that David suggested, i.e., to get a scope of work, a budget, and a schedule and maybe for 1-3 options of scopes of work. Jill seconded. It passed unanimously on a roll call.

4. Trails and Land Management

- **Post Pond Eurasian Water-Milfoil Update**

See above under other business. Sue also sent out a report by email to all members. It is proceeding well, despite some setbacks from weather, etc., The next session is next Saturday, August 12.

- **2023 UVTA Trails Project Update**

Russell will be out there next week but the overall project (scheduled to end Aug 10) will be delayed due to the ongoing inclement weather conditions. Hardpack is the last to be done after the base rock.

5. Project and Application Review

- No items were submitted.

6. Outreach and Education

- No items were submitted.



7. Other Business continued from item 1

- **Utility Club Pollinator Garden**

Lin reported that the work is progressing; they have pulled up ferns that came up despite the cardboard barrier. A plan to look at several pollinator gardens and do some education about Chaffee Wildlife was postponed due to illness. There is no plan yet for which plants will be used.

- **Correspondence from Elise Tillinghast of Northern Woodlands Magazine**

Blake noted that we had received a nice thank you note from Elise about the CC support for the "Moth Ball."

8. Publicity

- Blake will continue to send notices to the Lyme listserv.

9. Adjournment

- Blake called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Sue, seconded by Matt, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Barry Flood".

Secretary

The next meeting of the Lyme Conservation Commission will take place, both in person and via a Zoom teleconference link, at the Lyme Center Academy Building on Monday, September 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.