

**TOWN OF EPSOM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Epsom Town Offices, 1596 Dover Road, Epsom, NH
January 18, 2024, 6:00 PM**

PRESENT

Robyn Sweeney-Blaise, Chair
Chad Decker, Commissioner
Kate Champney, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary
Meadow Wysocki, Board of Selectmen Representative
Kim Gillis, resident
Ron Klemarczk, Town Forester

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Blaise called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

AGENDA REVIEW

MOTION: To approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Ms. Champney. Second by Chair Blaise. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Forest Timber Update

Ron Klemarczk, Town Forester, stated the sale has been completed with the timber harvest; the rain made the process difficult. The parking lot and road work has been finished; ditches and culverts were also installed. Mr. Klemarczk stated bars were put in the trails but those don't always last due to damage by ATVs. He stated the Commission voted to do extra ditch work after heavy rains in November and that helped dry the parking lot. A summary of the final account of the timber harvest was distributed, which included the stumpage payment and expenses. He suggested closing the Class VI roads in the area during the mud season. Ms. Wysocki stated there was a lock on the gate for a period of time but the Road Agent had to remove it.

Mr. Klemarczk asked if the Commission still wants to continue with the expansion of the trail system; he suggested he could flag a proposed route followed by a Site Walk with the Commissioners. The Commissioners reviewed the maps presented and discussed potential trail routes.

Mr. Decker noted the ditching around one of the old culverts near the entrance is still draining to the parking lot. Mr. Klemarczk stated he's planning to talk to the abutting property owner to do work in that area this spring. He stated the ideal time for a Site Walk would be in the spring time, after snow-melt; they could build bridges as needed after the ground dries. The additional trail will add about 4 miles to the system.

Mr. Decker asked if the proceeds from the timber harvest can be used for the trail expansion. Ms. Wysocki stated the proceeds go directly into the Epsom Conservation Commission capital reserve fund.

Deer Meadow Pond Milfoil Update

Kim Gillis, resident, gave a report on the status of bids for the milfoil treatment; she stated the costs are higher than initially estimated as the milfoil treatment area has expanded. She stated the difference is \$4,000 and requested the Conservation Commission consider postponing until next year, the amount previously committed to the project. Ms. Gillis stated they are still working on finding funding sources. Ms. Wysocki suggested they consider crowdfunding and post the need on social media groups. She stated there is no deadline for the usage of the funds committed. She also suggested soliciting membership to the association as a way to get the information out there and also collect dues which could be applied toward the treatment costs.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting of December 14, 2023 – No edits were made. **MOTION: To approve the minutes as presented. Motion by Ms. Champney. Second by Mr. Decker. Motion passed unanimously.**

Conservation Easements

Chair Blaise stated the reports have been completed and will be filed.

Town Forest Signs

Chair Blaise stated she still hasn't heard back from the State Prison so at the last meeting the Commissioners reviewed and discussed the purchase of five signs from campgroundsigns.com. Ms. Wysocki stated Chair Blaise can purchase for reimbursement or forward the information to Andrea at the Town Offices to complete the purchase. Chair Blaise stated she will ask the Road Agent if he has extra posts they can use for mounting the signs.

Mr. Decker stated they need to work on developing an information kiosk. There was also discussion about updating the map after the new trails are complete. Ms. Wysocki suggested utilizing a QR code for a link to the map and forest information; she also suggested looking into utilizing the AllTrails website. There was discussion about utilizing the old kiosk from Webster Park.

Ms. Wysocki suggested they consider trail marker signs. Chair Blaise there are some signs but there is no mileage; she agreed it would be nice to get the signs more complete.

Year-End Report Update

The Commissioners discussed the draft of the Conservation Commission Report for the Town Report.

Next Meeting

February 15, 2024, 6:00 PM.

MOTION: To adjourn. Motion by Mr. Decker. Ms. Champney seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary

APPROVED