

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2018

PRESENT: Bob Boynton, Chairman, Lisa Oden, David McTigue, Karen Miller, Matt Oliveira, Lori Rautiola

ABSENT: Jack Messe, Michael Bara, Kleta Dudley (SoRLAC Representative)

The meeting was called to order at the Town Office at 7:30 p.m.

Bob made a motion to donate \$25,000 to the Northeast Wilderness Trust for the purchase and protection of the Binney Hill Preserve (488 acres off Binney Hill Road). Lisa seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Bob reported the Stoddard Conservation Commission is looking for our support on for a bill before the NH House for the protection of elephants, rhinosaurus, whales, tigers, lions, sea turtles, sting rays and sharks. Bob stated these are all things that need protection; however, according to RSA36A this does not fall under the Commission's purview as these creatures are not located in the Town of New Ipswich. Lisa noted it stated on the document the members could sign the bill individually and not as a Commission if they wished to do so. Bob suggested the Commission not sign it as a Commission but if members felt they would like to sign it then to sign it individually. Karen noted she will be signing it individually.

Bob stated the Commission's budget was cut by 2/3, adding he has spent \$400 for a software update and is unsure where the money will come from to pay for this as there will be roughly \$300 in the Commission's budget for the year.

Lands: Bob questioned members if they felt there were any projects the Commission should be working on besides land protection which has been the focus for the past few months. Karen mentioned she is working on the educational information regarding water to increase townspeople's water awareness and taking care of their wells and properties. David noted due to the ground freezing the signs have not been hung. Bob mentioned hanging the signs on trees with aluminum nails instead of posts.

The Commission re-visited the PowerPoint document (Land Protection Criteria) that was distributed at last month's meeting. There was discussion on criteria for land protection and what types of criteria would be beneficial specifically for our Town. Bob stated there are two main subjects selecting land: 1) is the land available and 2) do we have the funds. Everything else revolves around that. Lisa noted most towns have general criteria in which they would use when selecting land for potential protection but each Town may have some distinct criteria they would use. Bob mentioned having all members' research land in town for potential protection.

David questioned the last bullet under terminology in the document that states "charitable deduction" for tax purposes and asked how the evaluation is done. Bob stated it is the current market value of the property after the easement is put on it.

Monitoring of town owned conservation lands was brought up. Bob noted the Commission is responsible to visit the properties and fill out a monitoring report for each parcel yearly. Jack has monitored the

Kellogg Property. Karen noted she, Jack and Klea had walked the Whitemore property in May of 2015. Bob stated he will compile a list of properties that need monitoring and then assign properties to each member who is able to monitor.

Bob referenced page 12 in the document and stated it is much better to assist with an easement verses buying it out right because it saves the Commission money and the land is still protected. Bob suggested the Commission send out a letter to homeowners letting them know the benefits of having an easement on their property.

Bob mentioned he updated the GIS map with a layer of town owned property with 10 acres or more.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola