

TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES, December 12, 2023

Larry Spencer called the meeting to order at 4:00

Commissioners Present: Larry Spencer, Shelagh Connelly, Anne Packard, April Sargent, Ben Amsden

Not Present: Bill Nesheim, Woodie Laverack,

Also Present: Lucinda Hannus, Land Use Administrator, Roger Larochelle, Emily Landry, Katie Currie-Huggard, staff members, Squam Lakes Conservation Society

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 14, 2023

“Motion to approve the minutes as presented “– L. Spencer
Second – S. Connelly

Approved: 3 - Yes, 0 - No

MAIL CHECK: Mr. Spencer reviewed the mail which consisted of two letters from NHDES regarding a shoreland protection permit (Map/Lot 217/016) and a Standard Dredge and Fill permit (Map/Lot 101/025 Walter’s Basin).

Mr. Spencer also discussed a recent meeting he attended at which several bills that have been introduced dealing with outdated septic systems, inspections upon property transfers, expanded use regulations for existing systems, designs by owners and other environmental topics that will be making its way through the legislature this year.

OLD ITEMS:

1. LCHIP Grant application – L. Spencer publicly confirmed the receipt of a \$210,000.00 grant from the state’s LCHIP award to aid in their acquisition of a diverse 243-acre property along a mile of the Pemigewasset River. He thanked Shelagh and April for attending the Governor’s Award ceremony at the state house. It was a great turnout and an impressive list of projects that received LCHIP conservation and restoration grants. Larry introduced the guests from the Squam Lakes Conservation Society that he invited to tonight’s meeting to provide insight and guidance on the grant process.

Roger Larochelle introduced two members of his staff, Emily Landry, Land Acquisition Director and Katie Currie-Huggard, Stewardship Director who have both had extensive experience managing grants and land acquisitions for conservation. Mr. Larochelle made mention and presented to the board their Squam Lookout publication and a conservation map that Emily produced of the town’s conservation lands. He continued by making mention of the stone that defined Squaw Cove and the legend of the Indian maiden Suneta, had recently been located and will be relocated and placed at the Sandwich Historical Society property

L. Spencer presented the due diligence spreadsheet he developed for the Oxbow project and inquired as to the budget figures that are likely to be associated with each item. He questioned whether we would use our own town attorney to do the title work and legal review, which question will be directed to the town administrator. Also discussed were potential costs for each of the items. Additional discussion continued on how the monies from the "Conservation Fund" can be accessed for payments. There appears to be uncertainty as to the process internally which will need further vetting by the conservation commission, the select board and the town administrator. L. Spencer's understanding is that a warrant article may need to be presented and approved at town meeting to reallocate these funds from the capital reserve fund to the conservation commission. Discussion continued as to the format of that request, should it be for the entire fund balance or just the projects costs. B. Amsden suggested that the entire balance be spun off and placed in a "typical" conservation fund that the CC members would have authority to spend. The CC chair and member Shelagh Connelly are planning to attend the Select Board's meeting on December 18th to continue the funding discussion. R. Larochelle continued by outlying the format of the uniqueness of two town's spanning the property, recommending that a Conservation easement that controls the restrictions on the property in perpetuity be held by the Pemi-Baker Land Trust and the actual land be held in ownership by the Town of Holderness. The flexible management plan would be jointly developed as a collaborative effort between the two entities possible as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Mr. Larochelle continued by mentioning they have a spring meeting in the development stages for local CC commissions to discuss topics common to all such as resources, shoreland protection act, current projects and their challenges and future endeavors.

M. Capone Town Administrator joined the meeting and continued the discussion between board members on the logistics of the funds that have been ear marked for conservation. Mr. Capone relayed the select boards concerns with the language of the grant agreement and the expenditure/reimbursement format. He will be in contact with Ben Wilcox, LCHIP Board chair, to access the contract so that counsel can review prior to the select boards next meeting.

NEW ITEMS: None

Next Meeting is January 9, 2023

ADJOURNMENT: With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Lucinda M. Hannus
Land Use Administrator