

MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017
MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was held on Monday, September 11, 2017 at 6:32 p.m. in the Merrimack Memorial Conference Room.

Chairman Gage Perry presided:

Members of the Commission Present: Matt Caron, Vice Chairman
Michael Boisvert
Cynthia Glenn
Gina Rosati
Tim Tenhave, Alternate Member (arrived at 6:33 p.m.)

Members of the Commission Absent: Councilor Jackie Flood

Also in Attendance: Roland Stone, 8 Woodhaven
Sandra Ostman, 400 D.W. Highway
Mark Twardoski, MET General Contracting, Inc.
Peter Mikolajczuk, Horse Hill Nature Preserve Sub-committee

The Commission observed a moment of silence in memory of the lives lost due to the events of September 11th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roland Stone, 8 Woodhaven

Commented he has resided in Merrimack for approximately 15 years, has had plenty of opportunities to hike on some of the trails, and wishes to see what opportunities are available to give back to the community.

Chairman Perry remarked members of the Merrimack Conservation Commission are appointed by the Town Council. There are sub-committees for each of the properties, members of which are appointed by the Commission. He commented on the various areas where volunteers are welcome, and noted the sub-committees are very much hands-on when it comes to the individual properties.

Meetings of the Commission and sub-committees are open to the public. Meeting agendas are posted on the calendar on the Town's website. Mr. Stone was encouraged to reach out to individual Commissioners with any questions(s).

Commissioner Tenhave spoke of the varied opportunities, and commented on the amount of information that can be found on the Commission's website, www.merrimackoutdoors.org.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

APPOINTMENTS - None

STATUTORY/ADVISORY BUSINESS

1. **Wildcat Falls donation** – Sandra Ostman, Merrimack NH is presenting her proposal to donate a granite memorial bench to the Wildcat Falls Conservation Area.

Sandra Ostman, stated she wishes to donate a granite bench as a memorial to two of her sons. She would like to place the bench at the start of the Falls Loop Trail at the Wildcat Falls Conservation Area. She noted the information provided with the agenda relative to the specifications for the bench.

Ms. Ostman stated she has resided in Merrimack since 1962. Her sons swam at Wildcat Falls. She spoke of having been on the ambulance back when they were run by volunteers. Her time doing that provided her a familiarization with the area.

Having noticed the benches at Watson Park, she began considering donating a bench as a memorial to her sons. She spoke of the location she wishes to place the bench and the size the area could accommodate.

She contacted Mark Rivet, Rivet Funeral Home, who has indicated he could bring the bench onsite and set it up, if the gate were opened and he could drive his truck down the first 3/10 of a mile. From there, his employees could carry it the rest of the way.

Ms. Ostman remarked she had considered another site, but was concerned increased traffic to the area could result in increased erosion going down to the river. She commented on how well the trails are maintained. When asked what the timeframe for installation would be, she replied, if approval is gained, she would look to Mr. Rivet to complete the project as soon as possible.

Chairman Perry commented there has been discussion of this being a gift, which would require a value being assigned, and acceptance of the gift by the Town Council. However, the request is to place a memorial bench on the property. Chairman Perry stated his belief it is not necessary for this request to go before the Town Council. Commissioner Tenhave agreed noting approving placement of benches has been done at the Commission level in the past.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI TO APPROVE THE REQUEST OF MS. OSTMAN TO
PLACE A MEMORIAL BENCH AT WILDCAT FALLS
MOTION SECONDED BY VICE CHAIRMAN CARON**

ON THE QUESTION

Commissioner Tenhave questioned if there would be engraving on the bench. Ms. Ostman stated her desire would be to include the names and dates of her sons as well as the musical symbol for B natural.

**MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0**

Chairman Perry suggested Ms. Ostman coordinate with Commissioner Rosati for the opening of the gate, when needed.

2. MET General Contracting, Inc. (applicant) and Three Palms, LLC. (owner)

Review for recommendation to the Planning Board of a Site Plan for a 7,000 square foot warehouse with supporting offices and associated improvements. The parcel is located at 5 Jennifer Drive in the I-1 (Industrial) and Aquifer Conservation Districts. Tax Map 4D-1, Lot 001.

Mark Twardoski, MET General Contracting, Inc., 25 Greeley Street, stated back in 2006 he had a building approved (8,000 sq. ft. office building). Had he constructed that building, it would likely have sat empty. He spoke of the location, which is not conducive to traffic or attractive to the right market of renters. His current desire is to construct a high-bay condex; two-story offices out front with a large overhead door in the back for garage space. That type of construction seems to be a limited

commodity in the area. He believes his property provides the proper zoning and that this would be the type of construction that is the right fit for the lot.

The project was originally planned to go before the Planning Board on the 19th; however, the review committee that was going over the plan has had questions for Meridian Land Services, Inc. It is likely the deadline for submission to have the matter appear on the Planning Board's September 19th agenda will be missed causing the project to be delayed by a few weeks.

Chairman Perry noted the project is within the Aquifer Conservation District. Mr. Twardoski commented he is a good steward of the property. The area closest to the aquifer is kept unpaved. Having been on the property for the past 15 years he has witnessed the amount of water that comes down the hill on Greeley Street and Jennifer Drive; millions of gallons entering the aquifer. As stewards of the property they do not do anything that could jeopardize the quality of water in Merrimack.

The proposed structure will be all concrete slab void of any drains. There will be a pitch on the garage doors, two-story office out front with full foundation (each will have a storage area in the basement, which is needed to run utilities from one end of the building to the other). Proposed drainage will capture all water and has protection for vehicles; basins to capture runoff.

Commissioner Tenhave questioned if changes are being proposed on the site, and was informed that is not the case. Mr. Twardoski remarked the questions the review committee had related to setbacks, etc. Commissioner Tenhave commented the Commission mainly reviews landscaping, water and how water is handled, and use to ensure there are no concerns relative to chemicals. Mr. Twardoski remarked topography is good, drainage is great, there is sufficient space for snow storage, etc. He stated all the large trees (buffer between properties) will remain. The desire is to keep the areas around the building open, but he would be open to adding a few trees in the front. He provided a copy of a previous landscaping plan (2005) noting most of the plantings did not survive. The area where the plantings were on the left-hand side was used for snow retention. The desire, now, is to plant a good number of flowers, which have proven to thrive in the area.

When asked, he stated there would be no drainage in the bays themselves. The basements are needed for utilities. He commented water and sewer can be gotten on Jennifer Drive, but does not go up Greeley Street. He must take everything from one end of the building through. The only sensible way to do it is to put full foundations so that there can be storage in the basement.

Chairman Perry stated a concern with chemicals being stored that could leak, and questioned how that would be contained. Mr. Twardoski responded the basins are set up; everything pitches away from the buildings. The basins are made to capture sand, oil, gas, vehicle leaks, etc. They are not leaching basins, they are made to retain and evaporate. Nothing would enter the soil. Leases will include language prohibiting anything flammable in the basements.

Chairman Perry called attention to the last page of the notes provided that referred to the leaching catch basin and perforated pipe, and questioned if it is maintained on a yearly basis. Mr. Twardoski stated that to be the case. He noted he does the plowing, landscaping, etc. on the property. He spoke of being fortunate that the parking lots get good sun relieving them of the need to put down salt, etc.

Mr. Twardoski stated a desire to be of assistance to the Commission in efforts to limit the activities that occur at the boat ramp particularly in the late hours of the evenings, and suggested consideration be given to restricting access after 8:00 p.m. Commissioner Boisvert commented the Town is considering forming a committee to oversee that area. Mr. Twardoski said he would be happy to participate, and commented nobody has more of a vested interest in the property and the activities that occur there than he does. He spoke of the number of times he has contacted the Police Department concerning shots being fired.

Commissioner Tenhave commented the proposed plan appears to be straightforward and includes conservative fertilizer language. Chairman Perry commented on the opportunity to become Green SnowPro Certified. It was noted were he certified, should something occur during the time he was following the practices taught, his liability would be more limited.

There being no objection, the Commission went out of the regular order of business to take up Sub-Committee Updates for the Horse Hill Nature Preserve and Wildcat Falls.

Horse Hill Nature Preserve

- Summit Trail re-route

Vice Chairman Caron stated the trail is coming along nicely. A bit of the top section was re-routed due to what is likely sensitive animal habitat. The trail will be a bit shorter than originally laid out. The sweeping corners were kept, and there are only 4 turns to reach the bottom. The plan is to construct the new trail, and then completely close the old trail.

Chairman Perry questioned if constructing of the new trail considers the wet section at the start. Coming off Rocky Trail and starting up the Summit Trail is an area of flow during the spring time. Vice Chairman Caron responded once coming up the hill the wet sections are being completely avoided. A bridge is being placed not because it is needed but so that crossing the existing trail does not erode it further. Water will flow under the bridge, to Rocky Trail, and off into the wet area. That wet section noted coming off Rocky Trail and starting up the Summit Trail will not be touched at all. Before that, is where the trail would be closed going up. From the top, it will be closed right at the top. Instead of being a T/Y intersection, that radius will be closed. The Summit Trail will no longer go straight, it will dog leg right and then hard right will be the East Slope Trail. The only truly impactful change will be the need for it to be re-mapped. Chairman Perry questioned if it is believed a solid connection has been identified for snowmobile traffic to get to the Summit Trail. Vice Chairman Caron stated that to be the case noting the trail would go from the powerlines up and down the East Slope Trail.

Commissioner Tenhave remarked at some point it will be necessary to address the Rocky Trail. There is a pole ford that dumps off underneath, and every now and then there is a trickle through there, but mostly it has been clogged up. There is the need to do something big enough to stop the flow down Rocky Trail or that will always be an issue.

Wildcat Falls

- Spaulding Plaque Funding Request

Mr. Mikolajczuk stated, as part of the Spaulding Foundation project, the Eagle Scout was going to place a plaque on an existing rock. Time ran out for that aspect of the project, and Mr. Mikolajczuk has taken that on. He worked with the Heritage Commission on the wording, and has provided that. The desire is to have the plaque in aluminum, which will last forever. Total cost is \$236.00.

- Eagle Scout project balance/donation

Chairman Perry spoke of having received information indicating there is \$50 in the troop account associated with this project, and that a check would be forwarded to the Commission in that amount. It was noted the funds could go into the HHNP fund. The monies needed for the plaque could come from that fund. When asked, Mr. Mikolajczuk stated his belief the HHNP fund has a balance of approximately \$800.

Chairman Perry questioned if there would be the need for the \$50 donation to be approved by the Town Council. Vice Chairman Caron noted any remaining funds being donated to the HHNP was identified as part of the Eagle Scout project, which has already been approved by the Town Council.

Commissioner Rosati questioned if there is the ability for individuals/groups to donate directly to the HHNP fund. Commissioner Tenhave stated the fund was created to accept donations. Commissioner Rosati commented the Commission needs to go before the Town Council to accept gifts/donations, but the HHNP fund does not. Commissioner Tenhave commented during the time he was Chairman of the Commission there were numerous occasions where there was input into the fund from the snowshoe race. In those instances, Paul Micali, Finance Director, was provided a check, which was deposited into the account.

The consensus was that the \$50 donation go directly into the HHNP fund.

MOTION BY VICE CHAIRMAN CARON TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$300.00) FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A PLAQUE AT THE SPAULDING FOUNDATION. SOURCE OF FUNDING IS THE HORSE HILL NATURE PRESERVE FUND

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

Horse Hill Nature Preserve (continued)

- Equipment Maintenance

Peter Mikolajczuk, Chairman, Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP) Sub-Committee, stated he was able to utilize John Lastowka's DR brush trimmer to mow some of the Wasserman Park trails, the Field Loop, the Power Lines on the HHNP, and Rocky Trail. Last Saturday the equipment began to experience carburetor troubles. A dealer in Milford, Engine Shop, was contacted. A carburetor cleaning is \$150 and a full service of the machine is another \$150. Typically, individuals bring the equipment in and have it assessed at a cost of \$25 and are provided a quote. He questioned if the Commission would approve the expense associated with servicing the equipment. Vice Chairman Caron spoke of the performance of the equipment, and remarked the individual allowing it to be borrowed should receive back a machine running in top condition. While we have it, having it running in top condition would also be beneficial. He commented on the amount of work the equipment can do.

Chairman Perry commented on the amount of volunteer time and equipment donated to the Commission to help manage the properties. He stated concern with setting a precedent of repairing equipment not belonging to the Commission; however, noted if the equipment is damaged by us that would be a different situation. He questioned how long the equipment had sat unused, and was informed it was likely years and years. Mr. Mikolajczuk commented he received it in a non-running state, cleaned it up, charged the battery, etc., and it started up. Commissioner Tenhave commented on the liability associated with anyone becoming injured while utilizing the equipment to perform the activity. He spoke of liability waivers that have been signed in the past. Mr. Mikolajczuk commented he sees it as the same as him being out on the property utilizing his chainsaw to cut a tree that has fallen across a trail. Commissioner Tenhave remarked it is the same thing, and people who have done that have had to sign liability waivers. If not, the Town has trained employees for such tasks. He commented it is a huge issue, and he is uncertain the Commission has sufficient information/clarification at this point.

Chairman Perry remarked it is a slippery slope. Commissioner Boisvert questioned if the Commission could look to the Town to get the work done, and was informed that has not occurred. Mr. Mikolajczuk

commented at least once a month he finds himself out on a trail using a chainsaw to cut a tree off the trail. Chairman Perry commented he does the same thing. There is equipment in the woods and it is being used. Commissioner Boisvert commented he is unsure how the situation could be avoided. Commissioner Rosati spoke of a discussion of creating a non-profit and the need to have individuals sign liability releases. Vice Chairman Caron commented to finish the Summit Trail a Trail Day will be conducted in the coming weeks. The non-profit organization that will put on the volunteer day will have everyone signing a liability waiver before they go out into the woods to build that trail. Commissioner Rosati questioned if it is something that could be held on file for members of the sub-committees, etc. Commissioner Tenhave responded as a member of the Commission, because of the appointed state, members fall under the Town. Sub-committee members do not as they are not appointed by the Town, which is why they need to sign liability waivers.

The question was raised of whether that should be done for all sub-committee members and kept on file. Vice Chairman Caron commented this discussion started with the Finance Director at one point in time, but did not reach conclusion.

Commissioner Tenhave suggested, before taking any action, the Commission needs to ask the appropriate questions, and gain additional knowledge.

Mr. Mikolajczuk commented it sounds as if he should hold off on his efforts with the trimmer or perhaps move forward with that on his own. Chairman Perry commented this is the type of situation he is not pleased with; being in a position where you are penalizing folks for their volunteer efforts. Mr. Mikolajczuk stated his impression to have been that he was covered for activities conducted on Town property. Commissioner Tenhave reiterated the need for clarification; if a blanket volunteer form is available and could be utilized, it should. When asked if the bike group he is affiliated with utilizes liability forms, Vice Chairman Caron stated there are some non-profit organizations that utilize annual forms; however, the bike group does it by event. Commissioner Tenhave commented there is a difference between releasing a non-profit from any liability and releasing the Town from any liability. It may be that two forms are required.

Chairman Perry questioned the will of the Commission regarding the request to expend monies to repair the equipment. It was re-stated the cost for the equipment to be fully serviced and the carburetor cleaned would be about \$300. Just to get it running and returned would be around \$85.00. It was noted the equipment could be sent to a small engine shop.

Chairman Perry commented he has a hard time with the thought of turning your back on it, but at the same time wonders what the response would be when a volunteer comes to the Commission having bent the bar on his/her chainsaw.

Mr. Mikolajczuk commented he brought the request forward because he wanted to continue to utilize the equipment. Now understanding maybe, he shouldn't be doing that, he leans more towards the less expensive solution of get the equipment going and return it. Commissioner Boisvert commented this was all the result of good work, and there would be work no longer getting done.

Commissioner Tenhave reiterated he simply believes there is the need for additional clarification. Vice Chairman Caron remarked this is a safe piece of equipment to run; safety mechanisms built in. This is owned by someone who has done a great deal for the HHNP and Town. Commissioner Rosati questioned the will of the Commission to approve the expenditure of up to \$150 with the stipulation that in the future when they sign a liability that it include language around the risk of utilizing personal equipment. Vice Chairman Caron agreed the issue should be followed up on to bring to conclusion.

Mr. Mikolajczuk commented had the Commission rented the equipment for time needed to accomplish what has been accomplished, the cost would have far exceeded what is being discussed.

Commissioner Rosati commented on the HHNP being Town property, which should be maintained by the Town. Vice Chairman Caron commented on the sheer volume of work the Town has before it, and the priority that must be placed on Town roads, etc. Chairman Perry commented on the limited number of mowers available as well as the number of personnel hours involved in the tasks. He questioned the amount of overtime that would be approved to mow trails, etc. Vice Chairman Caron also noted the familiarity the members of the sub-committees and other volunteers have with the properties, which is not the case with employees of the Public Works Department (PWD).

Commissioner Rosati questioned, if the Commission were to fund the repairs, would the intent be that the equipment would continue to be utilized or returned.

Several Commissioners voiced a desire to see the equipment repaired.

Mr. Mikolajczuk remarked if there is a small engine repair shop in Merrimack he would bring it to them. He felt it likely he would be able to have the repairs completed for less than \$200.

Commissioner Tenhave stated he would not support a motion now, as he feels the Commission would be going down the wrong path until having additional information. He acknowledged it is unfortunate the machine is not in a completely usable state. He offered to support the request personally by providing the \$80 he had in his possession commenting he knows Mr. Lastowka. He remarked the Commission went down this road without clarification and knowledge, and until that is acquired a precedent should not be set by expending Conservation monies fixing this. Mr. Mikolajczuk stated a willingness to tinker more with the equipment to see if he can get a positive result. However, if going forward the decision is that it should not be used any longer, for this year, he will get it running and return the equipment. He is confident Mr. Lastowka will allow the Commission to utilize the equipment in the future. Chairman Perry questioned if Mr. Lastowka is expecting the return of the equipment at a specific time, and was told that is not known. Mr. Mikolajczuk stated the equipment was left at his home. He was very excited, and got to work with it. He reiterated the comments made regarding it being a very valuable piece of equipment.

Mr. Mikolajczuk stated he would get the equipment running and return it. He is a volunteer who is willing to run the equipment, and will be ready when the Commission makes him aware the situation has been worked out.

Chairman Perry stated the need to discuss this with Tim Thompson, Director, Community Development Department and Paul Micali, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director to determine the proper way to proceed. He will contact them.

Vice Chairman Caron commented that is why volunteers stop volunteering. When asked how other commissions do this, he commented the Brookline Conservation Commission receives large yearly grants from the State to maintain their rail trail. They use those funds to hire people, fix the equipment their volunteers have, and they get it done. Their DPW goes out and mows it before every race. Their DPW staff know their facilities.

The Commission returned to the regular order of business.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Map Update

Chairman Perry stated he has been in touch with Papergraphics. They have the proofs. They wanted to add a little bit of a border to adjust for any shift going on. That is done. They are working on a

quote; however, it may be that they donate these maps as they did the other maps. The maps should be in hand on the 22nd.

Chairman Perry stated he would be making a set for each Commissioner, and asked that they take note, over the course of the coming year, of any changes they believe to be necessary so that they can be discussed during the review that will be conducted next year.

- Commissioner Rosati to present the draft press release of the new maps

Commissioner Rosati read the proposed press release into the record:

"The Merrimack Conservation Commission in conjunction with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is pleased to announce that as of October 1, 2017, newly designed interactive maps for the Horse Hill Nature Preserve, Grater Woods, Wasserman Conservation Area and the Wildcat Falls Conservation Area are available on www.MerrimackOutdoors.org. Maps can be accessed through your phone browser, the Esri Explorer application or a QR Code. The Merrimack Conservation Commission extends many thanks to Papergraphics of Merrimack for printing the trifold maps that are located at each property kiosk and are available to take with you. The new maps have updated trail information, parking as well as any restrictions. We look forward to seeing you on the trails."

Commissioner Tenhave suggested the statement be provided to the Community Development Department with a request that a Press Release be done. That will ensure the information is distributed to everyone having a Town email address as well as all local newspapers. He suggested contact information also be provided. The information will also be posted on the Commission's website, and forwarded to Matt Casparius, Director, Parks and Recreation Department.

When asked if the maps are ready for posting to the website, Commissioner Tenhave questioned if what he had received from the NRPC was the final version. Chairman Perry noted the only difference in the maps that will be provided by Papergraphics and the pdf files that were received from the NRPC is that the pdf files will not have the Papergraphics logo on them (proofs have not yet been received from Papergraphics). It is likely the current QR codes would bring up the incorrect map. There will be a need to create a QR code to that link. Commissioner Tenhave suggested the maps be posted when completed.

Commissioner Rosati suggested waiting on the press release until the maps have been received.

2. Website Update

Commissioner Tenhave spoke of the maintenance contract with Wetherbee Creative whereby each quarter they do a body of work. For the last quarter, a request was made for the creation of a gallery page for each of the properties. That work has been done, and each of the property pages now include a link to the gallery, which will provide access to every photo posted for that property. The galleries can be added to. There is an upload page for people interested in uploading photos. The photos must be approved; manual process to take the photos from the upload location to the appropriate gallery page. It was set up that way to ensure the photos are viewed prior to being made public.

The number of photos located in the quick scroll was reduced. There is a comment on the website that informs users viewing the photos is data intensive.

All the sub-committee pages have been created for the major properties. It is now time for the sub-committees to start providing content. There are a few major headings for each, e.g., what are you

working on, membership information, etc. Commissioner Tenhave stated his hope the sub-committees will begin the process of discussing what they would like to appear on their page.

There are sub-committee pages set up for Fields Farm and the Wasserman Conservation Area. Those basically indicate the Commission is looking to set up a sub-committee, and anyone interested in participating in that way should contact the Commission. There have already been inputs for Fields Farm. He will reach out to those individuals.

When editing the website and making other changes, Ms. Wetherbee creates videos on how to do it.

The last thing they were asked to consider is the issue of fundraising, and how the Commission could set up the website to allow individuals to donate funds to the Commission. Ms. Wetherbee suggested creating a Paypal account, and have donations go through that. Ms. Wetherbee could do the webpage work to put it in place once a Paypal account is created. The only question is will there be the issue of the number of donations adding up to an amount that would trigger the need for Town Council approval of the donation.

Commissioner Rosati questioned if donations are tax deductible, and was informed that should be the case given the Town is a non-profit. She questioned if she could conduct a fundraiser, and then donate monies generated through Paypal. Commissioner Tenhave was asked to follow-up with Finance Director Micali to determine how the process would work.

Commissioner Tenhave noted the quarter ends at the end of September, and additional activities need to be identified for the next quarter.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Annual Meeting of the Commission

- Commission to review its by-laws and see if any changes are necessary

Chairman Perry noted Article VI, B states: "Members shall observe the established goals of the Commission such as natural resource land use, water quality protection, and proper management of town owned parcels consistent with the letter and spirit of the enabling RSA's of New Hampshire."

The Commission has also created Management Plans and Stewardship Plans for its properties, which are another level of enforcement. Adhering to those plans is not mentioned in the Bylaws. He questioned the will of the Commission.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO AMEND ARTICLE VI SECTION B BY ADDING THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE AT THE END OF THE LAST SENTENCE: "AS WELL AS ANY MANAGEMENT AND/OR STEWARDSHIP PLANS OFFICIALLY ADOPTED BY THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION OR THE TOWN OF MERRIMACK FOR THE PROPERTIES WE MANAGE AND ARTICLE II SECTION E BY DELETING "AT THE TIME" AS IT IS STATED TWICE
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0

- Commission to hold its annual election for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Chairman Perry called for nominations for Chairman of the Merrimack Conservation Commission for the 2017-2018 term.

**COMMISSIONER ROSATI NOMINATED GAGE PERRY
COMMISSIONER GLENN SECONDED**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF GAGE PERRY TO THE POSITION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE MERRIMACK
CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE 2017-2018 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-1

Commissioner Perry Abstained

Commissioner Perry declared Chairman of the Merrimack Conservation Commission for the 2017-2018 term.

Chairman Perry called for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Merrimack Conservation Commission for the 2017-2018 term.

**COMMISSIONER ROSATI NOMINATED MATT CARON
COMMISSIONER GLENN SECONDED**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF MATT CARON TO THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE
MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE 2017-2018 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

Commissioner Caron declared Vice Chairman of the Merrimack Conservation Commission for the 2017-2018 term.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Perry informed the Commission the vote taken at the last meeting to “order the laminated kiosk sized maps for each of the existing kiosks; Wildcat Falls, Grater Woods, Wasserman Park, and the Horse Hill Nature Preserve, and an additional map in Amherst at a cost not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500)” did not identify the funding source. He requested a motion to identify the funding source.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI THAT THE FUNDING SOURCE FOR THE PURCHASE OF
LAMINATED KIOSK SIZED MAPS, APPROVED AT THE AUGUST 21, 2017 MEETING, BE
IDENTIFIED AS FUND 53**

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

1. Trail Signs at Wasserman Conservation Area

Chairman Perry spoke of an email received by Director Casparius, which was forwarded to the Commission. The email was from an individual who had walked Wasserman with the help of a map, and despite having the map, felt a little lost. Vice Chairman Caron noted every single trail has a sign. It was noted the only trail that is blazed is Quarry Trail. However, at every intersection there is a named hand-routed sign. Chairman Perry stated he would follow up with the individual

Subcommittee Updates

Wildcat Falls

Chairman Perry spoke of having received an email from Lori Barrett, Operations Manager, PWD, regarding a request made for 6 yards of gravel. He commented on what 6 yards equates to. Commissioner Rosati stated the desire was to utilize gravel for the picnic table area. Commissioner Tenhave stated, if the desire was for a 4" spread, that area would only utilize 1 yard. Ms. Barrett had indicated she does not have it in the budget to be able to provide that amount. She is pleased to be of assistance, but does not have the amount requested.

Commissioner Rosati stated the memo she received from Karen Labonte states: "We are all set for gravel delivery of 6 yards for the picnic table area across from the retaining pond whenever the department has time for delivery." She stated she would communicate with Ms. Labonte.

The Commission determined future requests to the Town would be funneled through the sub-committee Liaison to the Chair of the Commission.

Commissioner Rosati noted an additional email between Ms. Labonte and Ms. Barrett. During the walk, they discussed relocating the picnic table to the small clearing, which Ms. Barrett was acceptable to. Ms. Labonte questioned, due to the nature of the location next to the access road, if there were any regulations, e.g., distance away from the access road, and Ms. Barrett responded she was not aware of any restrictions as long as it is not impeding the emergency access. Ms. Labonte went on to state erosion repairs are needed for two locations on the access roads leading into the property, and went on to identify the exact locations. She questioned if there are any Town regulations or advance notices required. Ms. Barrett responded there are not, she simply requests she be made aware when the trails will be inaccessible.

It was noted Ms. Labonte and Ms. Barrett met and walked the trail to review the issues of erosion. When asked, Chairman Perry stated the PWD would repair the area with the material they determine is best to utilize. When asked if they would utilize gravel, he noted $\frac{3}{4}$ minus crushed gravel would be a good road surface (sand currently). It is possible that is where the discussion of 6 yards of gravel came from. It was reiterated the PWD will take care of the erosion issues. The only thing that is unclear is whether the PWD can spare a yard of gravel for the picnic table area. He also requested to be provided with pricing information. If there is the need to purchase the desired material a motion could be made to cover that cost.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO APPROVE AN EXPENDITURE TO COVER THE COST OF A YARD OF GRAVEL ONCE THAT COST IS KNOWN, AND TO REPORT BACK TO THE COMMISSION ON THE ACTUAL AMOUNT OF THE EXPENDITURE. SOURCE OF FUNDING IS FUND 53
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ROSATI
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0

Grater Woods

- Castor Trail – Naming request

Vice Chairman Caron stated Castor Trail is a trail the sub-committee began work on last year. It leaves the School Loop Trail, crosses a bridge that was installed last year, and heads out towards Marty Drive. As it approaches the neighborhood it takes a left, hugs the water, and comes out on the access road from Conservation Drive. One of the sub-committee members proposed the name "Castor Trail"

because it follows the beaver pond and the bridge crosses just below the beaver dam. Castor is the Latin genus for beaver.

Vice Chairman Caron noted the trail is not currently on the map. It is not blazed. A member of the public blazed the trail with a spray paint can. The sub-committee covered that in a way that blended with some of the trees, but not all. The existing trail crosses private property in two locations to avoid stream crossing. The property owners have been contacted, and have indicated no concerns. The possibility of trail easement documents being put in place was discussed. Vice Chairman Caron will bring the language forward for review by the Commission.

Commissioner Tenhave remarked it cannot be made an official trail until there is an agreement in place with the private land owners. When asked what class trail it would be, Chairman Perry stated it would be non-motorized.

- D3 Trail – Being removed from active projects

Vice Chairman Caron stated the intent was simply to make the Commission aware the D3 Trail has been removed from the active projects list.

Dawn Tuomala, Deputy Director/Town Engineer, PWD, continues work on the bypass road. Chairman Perry noted the volume of work the department has associated with street paving. However, Deputy Director Tuomala has relayed she is close to being able to provide the information needed to send the project out to bid. Commissioner Tenhave noted the desire to be able to apply to the State's Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund for this project (March timeframe).

- Classroom Bridge & Boardwalk – Project is complete / Budget discussion

Vice Chairman Caron stated the classroom bridge and boardwalk project is complete. Members of the sub-committee were thanked for their efforts on this project.

Chairman Perry spoke of the budget for the bridge project. There was a donation from the New England Mountain Bike Association; 12' treads. The budget was \$1,320.00. Total amount expended was \$1,356.22. There remain supplies with an approximate value of \$300.

Commissioner Rosati noted the Girl Scouts have completed two of the bridges. She will reach out to discuss the last two bridges (Brickyard and Ridge). Vice Chairman Caron stated the 3rd of the four bridges they had intended to address is now missing a decking board. Chairman Perry stated he was the cause of that; while walking on it recently he stopped, turned to step back, and it went. Vice Chairman Caron noted if the scouts plan on working on that bridge, the gate can be unlocked to allow them to drive up to it. The Commission expressed its gratitude to the scouts for the excellent work they performed. There is the need for the other two bridges to be addressed prior to snowfall; particularly the Brickyard Bridge. If, with the start of the school year, the scouts no longer have the bandwidth to work on those, the Commission will look for other means of getting the repairs completed.

2. Upcoming Events

- Tree Farm Annual Field Day – Saturday 30 Sep, Lebanon NH
- NHACC Annual Meeting – Saturday 4 Nov, Pembroke NH

The Commission was provided with information on both events. Chairman Perry requested Commissioners interested in attending the NHACC Annual Meeting make him aware so that the fee can be paid.

Vice Chairman Caron spoke of an event scheduled for September 30th; Souhegan Valley Cross-Country Hike - Exploring a Castor Pond.

PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

Merrimack Conservation Commission. August 21, 2017

The following amendments were offered:

Page 2, Line 14; insert "it" before "will"
Page 3, Line 28; insert "we" after "beginning"
Page 5, Line 44; replace "OF" with "OR"
Page 5, Line 50; delete "Commissioner Rosati" as it is listed twice

**MOTION BY VICE CHAIRMAN CARON TO ACCEPT AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0**

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Tenhave spoke of having received a reminder of the need to conduct the Wasserman Conservation Area walk for the LCIP. He requested that be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Boisvert spoke of having met with Directors Casparius and Thompson regarding the Sklar Waterfront Park. An advisory committee will be formed.

Anheuser Busch contacted Director Casparius after seeing an article in the newspaper about the recent purchase of the Sklar property. Commissioner Boisvert reached out to Tom Blake, Environmental Manager, Anheuser Busch. They wish to become involved in volunteer efforts on the property.

Chairman Perry stated the 25th Annual Halloween Party will take place at Wasserman Park on October 25th from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GLENN TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY VICE CHAIRMAN CARON
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0**

The September 11, 2017 meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan