

**LANCASTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING
December 14, 2020**

Meeting conducted via ZOOM.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by A Ryder.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Roll call was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Carr, Don Frenette and Rob Christie. Allan Ryder and Kim Votta joined the meeting via Zoom.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jessie Morin, Rick Walling, Eric Livingstone, Greg Burry and Kate Hartnett via Zoom.

R Christie read the following:

This meeting is being held in an emergency status due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Under emergency circumstances, the meeting is being held via a videoconference exchange. This will allow for the Committee to discuss and deliberate items contemporaneously and allow for public participation and engagement as permitted. All votes will be by roll call.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by A Ryder and seconded by D Frenette to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting

Motion carried by roll call vote.

Appointment: Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) (via Zoom) Jessie Morin and Rick Walling

Presentation was made by J Morin. He explained that ACT is a non-profit land trust serving the North Country of New Hampshire. He said they focus on land conservation easements where the landowner continues to own the land but has no rights to develop the property. Mr. Morin outlined their strategic planning process. He said that ACT conservation project priorities are farm land, working forests, wildlife, rivers and recreation. Mr. Morin explained that he asked to attend Conservation Commission meeting because ACT would like to extend their strategic analysis to the Town of Lancaster. He said ACT is always transparent about prioritizing projects in a town and how they go about doing business. Mr. Morin said that Lancaster's recent NRI report will help ACT. He said recreation and trails are important to ACT; information as to where the trails are and is there any trail planning in Lancaster. Mr. Morin said that ACT would like to open communication between the Conservation Commission and ACT. He said they are also looking for a volunteer from Lancaster to participate in the ACT process (a Lancaster voice on the committee). Mr. Morin said he would like to come back to a Conservation Commission meeting and work with the Conservation Commission to find a volunteer representative.

R Christie noted that the McGee farm is part of ACT.

A Ryder said that he will share the NRI report with ACT.

Select board Report: none. Leo Enos was not present.

OTHER BUSINESS

Review current and/or pending applications, projects, and NHDES matters: PPLC report - A Ryder.
A Ryder advised that B Oleson, R Christie and himself attended the Zoom meeting regarding PPLC with the State and NHDES. He said there is \$140,000 in mitigation money available. Mr. Ryder said the Conservation Commission and town do not currently have a project. He said if there is a project in the near future an application can be submitted.

Treasurer's Report – R Christie

About \$600 has been spent in advertising for board vacancies and scholarship. Only one scholarship has been submitted.

Proposed 2021 budget has been presented to the Select board and Town Manager.

Conservation Fund report – in 1989 by Warrant Article the town voted to devote 10% of the land use change tax to go into the Conservation Fund. It appears the money has not been deposited into the fund over the years. Will investigate further.

Education Budget

There is \$2500 available in the education budget. A Ryder asked how much was spent on advertising for the scholarship. R Christie did not have an actual amount but advised that the advertising would come out of the miscellaneous line in the budget. A Ryder asked how much should be awarded for the scholarship this year. R Christie suggested awarding as much as possible but saving \$500 to \$600 to prepare the NRI to distribute.

Moved by R Christie and seconded by K Votta to award up to \$2000 in scholarship funds.

Motion carried by roll call vote.

Moved by R Christie and seconded by D Frenette to award \$2000 in scholarship money to the 2020 applicant subject to the scholarship requirements.

Motion carried by roll call vote.

Letter of Appreciation: John Accardi

A Ryder will draft a letter and will have it ready for the January meeting.

Draft annual report to Town

R Christie will draft a report for review by the board.

Nomination recommendations

Four have submitted letters of interest. Margaret Hobbs, Nancy Southworth Eric Livingstone and Greg Burry. Eric Livingstone introduced himself and briefly explained why he is interested in the position. R Christie provided information about Margaret Hobbs and why she is interested and read letters of interest from Nancy Southworth and Greg Burry.

A Ryder noted that a decision does not have to be made this evening. There is one current vacancy and an expected vacancy in March.

Moved by R Christie and seconded by A Ryder to discuss and make recommendations to fill the vacancies at the January meeting.

Motion carried by roll call vote.

alendar and Planning Cycle: Warrant Articles to create Town Forest, Assign to LLC

A Ryder will speak to Selectmen, Town Manager and Ben Oleson before the January meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Easement Monitoring Reports

R Christie reported that shortly after the end of the year the reports will have to be submitted to the State. This will be on the agenda for the January meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

A Ryder stated that the board needs to be careful when sending emails as it could be construed as doing business thru the emails. He said business must be done at the meetings.

A Ryder reported that the Selectmen approved the Town Forest harvest to be managed by Greg Ainsworth with the logger Timberwolf. Timberwolf increased the bid by \$500 to \$600.

R Christie suggested to the Selectmen that they dedicate the town forest harvest monies to improving the town right of way to the town forest which is a 2,000 ft. access as opposed to the 10,000 ft. Causeway St access.

A Ryder said that he will approach the Selectmen when the harvest happens to see if they will have the right of way cleared.

Moved by R Christie and seconded by A Carr to spend up to \$500 in the education fund to publish the ^IRI report (50-100 copies) for the town committees and to make them available to the public.

A Ryder suggested that the town boards should be asked how many they need.

R Christie suggested creating an E-Link.

Kate Hartnett asked if it would be on the town website. Answer was yes.

Motion carried by roll call vote.

Greg Burry introduced himself via Zoom.

Moved by R Christie and seconded by A Carr to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Jean Oleson



Clerk

Approved:



Allan Ryder, Chairman