

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, July 5, 2006
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present: Chairman K. Knowlton, N. Wederski, M. Lewandoski,
D. Naiva, B. Watterson, G. Wells-Kay
Members Absent: W. Peterson(u)
Alternates Present: S. Rolfe(e), M. McLetchie(u)
Staff: C. Daigle, D. Rollins

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by D. Naiva, it was voted to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2006 meeting as written. (6-0)

TOWN FOREST WORK DAY:

Chairman Knowlton said that the town forest work day was very fruitful. The work was done in one day when they thought it might take two. There were some residents from Wildlife Boulevard who came out to help. He asked D. Naiva to write a letter of thanks for their help and also a letter to send to the residents of Wildlife Boulevard explaining to them the work that the Commission is doing in the town forest. The members were happy to report that they found very little trash. G. Wells-Kay said they found a low ropes course nailed into some trees. She wondered if it was put up by the high school. C. Daigle said it would be appropriate for the Commission to write to the school and let them know that they are actively managing the town forest now and give them someone they can contact. The school needs to inform them of anything they are doing in the town forest other than the cross country trail.

TOWN FOREST & HARKER PROPERTY – DRAFT RULES & REGULATIONS:

K. Knowlton told the members that they need to decide on what regulations to put in for the town forest and how to go about it. B. Watterson said that the Conservation Commission has the authority to set up it's own regulations and stewardship for the property. C. Daigle said they can start by developing a

list of do's and don'ts and a purpose statement for that parcel of land. Then they can go to town counsel. After that they will hold a public meeting and adopt the regulations. She said that the Land Use Department can help them out with it.

The members agreed that they do not want to allow any ATVs or other motorized vehicles, no overnight camping or fires. It will be carry in/carry out for trash. They will not allow any cutting of wood or doing any alterations to the property. They also are prohibiting any firearms or alcoholic beverages to be brought into the town forest. The members did agree to allow bow hunting but no permanent deer stands. They also agreed to allow snowmobiles on one trail. K. Knowlton said that there is a trail that the locals use to get to the main trails. The members said that they would also allow cross country skiing, snowshoeing and horseback riding. They would also permit fishing but no motorized boats.

K. Knowlton said that the signs are up at the two access points and underneath he would like a sign stating the permitted uses in the town forest.

K. Knowlton would like to see the gates installed at the two Wildlife Boulevard access points as soon as possible. The members had discussed using large rocks and then gates later on. M. Lewandoski said that the expected price to install each gate is \$1500. B. Watterson said that they should authorize the subcommittee or Chairman Knowlton to go ahead and make the decision on the gates. He said they could possibly get the Public Works Department to help them out. They also may have some material that can be used for the gates. K. Knowlton said that there may be some materials from the conservation property on Route 140 that could also be used. M. Lewandoski suggested that rocks be used on the outside of the gates to prevent the wheeled vehicles from getting in.

D. Naiva has spoken with a resident of Tioga Estates who is an abutter to the town forest. She said that one of the trails goes on their property and they have no problem with the town using it as long as they get some kind of liability waiver. They would like a letter from the town saying that they are not responsible. C. Daigle said that the town cannot sign away the public's right to sue. K. Knowlton said that the members need to solidify where the town forest property lines are. It would be in their benefit to do this. They feel that this trail could be re-routed to stay on the town forest land.

K. Knowlton showed the members a map of the trails that was roughed out. He would like to have them laminated and put on the post at the entrance gates. G. Wells- Kay suggested that once a year the members should go out and inspect the town forest. B. Watterson said that should be part of the stewardship plan.

The members decided to discuss the Harker property at a later date. One thing they did decide about it was to change the name to the Depot Street Conservation property.

BEAN DAM:

The members decided not to discuss the Bean Dam property at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS:

THE BELKNAP MOUNTAIN RANGE:

D. Naiva, K. Knowlton and R. Ball attended the first meeting of the proposed 4 town joint effort to protect the Belknap Range on June 29. D. Naiva said that all four towns that border the Belknap

Mountain Range were represented. She said that it was a very basic meeting. They would like them to go back to their towns and get an idea of interest that the Conservation Commissions or Planning Boards may have. They described the range which is around 100,000 acres and currently 20-26,000 acres are protected. They distributed maps of the range. K. Knowlton said that even though Belmont doesn't border much of the range the Tioga comes from it. He said that they would like to see all the neighboring towns make a statement that shows solidarity in the towns that possibly something can be done. D. Naiva agreed that it is a very important resource. The next meeting is scheduled for August 10.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by N. Wederski, seconded by M. Lewandoski, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. (6-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins

