

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, April 1, 2009
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present:	Chairman K. Knowlton, G. Wells-Kay, D. Naiva, D. Morse
Members Absent:	S. Rolfe(e), W. Peterson(u)
Alternates Present:	M. McLetchie
Alternates Absent:	M. Lewandoski(u)
Staff:	R. Ball, D. Rollins

The chairman opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. He appointed M. McLetchie as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

MOTION: On a motion by G.Wells-Kay, seconded by D. Naiva, the members voted to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2009 meeting as written. (4-0) D. Morse abstained.

NANCY WEDERSKI:

Nancy was present so the members could thank her for her ten years of service as a member on the Conservation Commission. Each member told her how much they appreciated her time and assistance on the Commission and will miss her. They presented her with a gift and D. Morse gave her a certificate of appreciation from the Board of Selectmen.

NEW MEMBERS:

Carol Fairfield told the members that she is interested in becoming a member of the Conservation Commission. She has lived in Belmont for 4 years and is an oceanographer for the U.S. Government. K. Knowlton had previously spoken with her and briefed her on the Commission's projects. After talking with her the members agreed they would like her to become a member. D. Morse said that he would bring her recommendation to the next Selectmen's meeting as an alternate member on the Commission.

Keith Bennett will be asked to attend the next Selectmen's meeting. He sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking to become a full member on the Conservation Commission.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by G. Wells-Kay, the members voted to have K. Knowlton remain as the Chairman of the Conservtion Commission. (4-0)

MOTION: G. Wells-Kay made a motion to nominate D. Naiva to be Vice Chairman of the Conservation Commission. It was seconded by K. Knowlton. All the members were in favor. (4-0)

NEW HAMPSHIRE WATER RESOURCES PRIMER:

R. Ball told the members that this is the first time that the state has put into one document all of the information about the water resources in the state. NH is the first state to do this comprehensive of a job of this type. In 2003 a Water Resources Committee was put together by the Legislature. This is the first time a description of NH specific issues and topics related to surface water, groundwater, water quantity, water quality, water use and conservation, and water related infrastructure is contained in one document.

The primer has 12 chapters. In chapter 1 the Introduction and Overview provides a brief description of the 4 primary challenges to sustainable water resource management that underlie the remaining topic specific chapters. These include: Landscape Change, Climate Change, Aging and Inadequate Water Infrastructure and Information Needs.

The remaining chapters are Rivers, Lakes and Ponds, Groundwater, Wetlands, Coastal and Estuarine Waters, Water Use and Conservation, Drinking Water, Wastewater, Stormwater, Dams, and Floods and Droughts. Each of these chapters provides information about the topic, issues related to it, and current management efforts, together with a few key stakeholder recommendations.

R. Ball said that the Commission has talked a lot about groundwater protection so this document could be used as a basis. D. Naiva said the word primer sounds like it's a beginning or a base for the state to look at how developing is occurring. It could be used as a way to increase people's awareness for the consequences of not protecting the water. K. Knowlton is concerned that they show the outside factors that are going to happen and they see what's coming but he doesn't see a concerted effort to prevent them. He said that they show that most development is going to take place along the seacoast and is concerned that they aren't going to try to stop this growth. They tell you that this growth is needed.

The members discussed what they can do as a Commission about groundwater protection. They agree that it should be a local control issue. G. Wells-Kay suggested they meet with other towns to see what they do. R. Ball suggested that they could start with the Legislature to change groundwater withdrawal laws. K. Knowlton said he will contact other towns who have tried to enact ordinances or are also concerned about who controls their water. D. Naiva said they need to get on board with the Planning Board. She said that in the Planning Board minutes of February 23 it was suggested by W. Peterson to talk to the Legislators rather than support an ordinance that is not legal. D. Morse said there should be a water withdrawal tax much like the gravel tax.

STAFF REPORT:

FIVE RIVERS:

R. Ball said that he heard from Chuck Knox of Five Rivers Conservation Trust. He said Five Rivers will be sending the Commission a written packet of what will be needed to finalize the conservation easement on the Tioga River property.

OTHER BUSINESS:**BELKNAP RANGE CONSERVATION COALITION:**

D. Naiva said she will contact them about having the Commission become a member as a group.

WETLANDS STUDY:

D. Naiva asked if there was an update about the wetlands study. R. Ball said he would call Stoney Ridge to get one.

TOWN FOREST TRAIL WORK:

D. Naiva suggested the members plan on doing the work on the accessible trail in the town forest in August. She told the members she hasn't heard yet about the grant they applied for.

NEWSLETTER:

D. Morse asked if the newsletter could be put on the town's website. R. Ball will see to this.

SANBORN FARM WALK:

The members will be meeting to walk the Sanborn Farm property on Saturday, April 25 with a rain date of Sunday, April 26. G. Wells- Kay said she will see if Karen Feltham or Howard Warren will be able to accompany them.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

Chairman Knowlton moved to enter non-public session at 8:55 p.m in accordance with RSA 91-A:3.II(d). Those agreed were G. Wells-Kay, D. Naiva, M. McLetchie, and D. Morse

The members agreed to come out of non-public session at 9:05 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by G. Wells-Kay, seconded by D. Naiva, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:058 p.m. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins

