

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, May 5, 2010
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

Members Present:	Chairman Ken Knowlton, Denise Naiva, David Morse, Carol Fairfield, Keith Bennett
Members Absent:	Ward Peterson(u), Scott Rolfe(e)
Alternates Present:	Brent O'Brien
Alternates Absent:	Mark Lewandoski(u)
Staff:	Rick Ball, Denise Rollins

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

BELKNAP COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT:

Lisa Morin who is the Coordinator for the Belknap County Conservation District (BCCD) was present to discuss the programs offered by the BCCD to aid towns in their conservation efforts. She said she was hired to replace Jan Hooper who she had worked with for a number of years. She gave the members numerous handouts. The BCCD is a non-regulatory entity and acts as a liaison between the government and its citizens. Some of their functions are to deliver information, coordinate training, procure and administer grants, and set priorities for natural resource conservation. Conservation Districts also provide administration, technical, and financial assistance to cooperators, land users and municipalities. She noted that BCCD's top priorities are agricultural conservation, community planning, water quality, wetlands, surface mining, wildlife, woodlands, air quality and energy. Ms. Morin said that the BCCD can help users with doing a web soil survey if they needed. Maps can be generated by address and are accurate to 3-6 acres. BCCD will help free of charge. BCCD recently helped Gilford apply for an Aquatic Resource Mitigation grant.

Ms. Morin told the members that the BCCD is also holding three informational sessions around Belknap County; the next one is on May 19. The meetings will discuss "Household Energy Efficiency". Ms. Morin asked the members if they could provide her with ideas on how the BCCD could assist Belmont. She has met with other towns and talked to them about helping with outreach. She had read our recent minutes and learned about the glossy buckthorn invasion on the Town's property. BCCD can help by pulling together volunteers to help with this.

K. Knowlton asked Ms. Morin if she knew of a grant that could assist the farmers with their hay fields. He would like for the Commission to be able to show farmers a way to help fund their work. Ms. Morin said that she will investigate that. She said it may be possible for the farmers to form a cooperative in a business sense. She will look into the funding to rehab or establish quality hay fields. BCCD's goal moving forward is to do more community outreach. S. Rolfe, who couldn't attend tonight's meeting, sent K. Knowlton an e-mail saying that he would like BCCD to focus on local woodland and farm owners to help them to gain knowledge about current use, forest management and developing management plans. He would also like to develop a town farmers market.

K. Knowlton said that the members would be willing to help co sponsor informational meetings. He told her that the Commission is concentrating on acquiring land that borders the Tioga River.

The members thanked Ms. Morin for coming to meet with them.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

R. Ball noted that there was an error in the minutes about the town forest trail plan. The plan was to have a spillway with 12 to 1 sides not 2 to 1 as written.

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by K. Bennett, the members voted to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2010 meeting as amended. (4-0) D. Morse abstained.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

MOTION: D. Naiva made a motion to nominate S. Rolfe to be Vice Chairman of the Conservation Commission. It was seconded by K. Bennett. All the members were in favor. (5-0)

MOTION: On a motion by C. Fairfield, seconded by D. Naiva, the members voted to have K. Knowlton remain as the Chairman of the Conservation Commission. (5-0)

RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Chairman Knowlton asked the members if they had any problem with changing the meeting time to 6:00 p.m. The members all agreed to the change starting with their next meeting in June.

MOTION: On a motion by C. Fairfield, seconded by K. Bennett, the members voted to accept the Rules of Procedure as revised. (5-0)

AQUATIC RESOURCES MITIGATION GRANT APPLICATION:

R. Ball said that his first approach to the grant was to have it help pay for the conservation easement on the Tioga River Wildlife and Conservation Area and also for some wetland and upland

restoration there. After reading Stoney Ridge Environmental's report on the property, he took the initiative and applied for the cost of removing the glossy buckthorn that is infesting the property. Rather than trying to just maintain it in place he looked into seeing what it would cost to remove it entirely because unless it was removed completely, the Commission would never get ahead it. He found some unit pricing on the removal of invasive species published for the 2010 round of WHIP grants. The unit price is \$580 an acre and with 26 acres of glossy buckthorn it would cost around \$30,000 for the 2 years needed to begin eradication. Whoever the BCC hires to do the project would have to go in the first year with hand held brush cutters and chop it down. When it sprouts, holding a torch to each stem for 5 seconds knocks it down. Someone will have to go in and do that for a couple of years. When the seedlings become somewhat easier to control the BCC will have to follow up with management. The total amount of the grant applied for is \$31,060 to pay for two years removal. The BCC will pay a total of \$4600; \$1600 for the initial report and \$1500 for each year of two years monitoring.

STAFF REPORT:

BUDGET:

R. Ball told the members that after paying \$1,500 for the Invasive Management Plan they have a balance of \$4,600 in their conservation projects line.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by D. Naiva, seconded by C. Fairfield, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins