

Conservation Commission

Wednesday, November 4, 2009
Corner Meeting House
Belmont, New Hampshire

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

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

BIOSOLIDS/SLUDGE:

K. Knowlton said that this is an informational meeting not subject to opinions. The members are present to get information about Biosolids.

Mary MacDonald of Resource Management Incorporated (RMI) presented a power point on Biosolids. First she gave a brief introduction about RMI. They are a regional organic residuals recycling company located in Holderness, NH. They operate primarily in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Annually they recycle over 275,000 cubic yards of organic residuals. She said they have been approached by some local farmers wanting to use Class A Biosolids on their property in Belmont. A few weeks ago they addressed the Belmont Planning Board who suggested they also meet with the Conservation Commission. They are here to provide information about Biosolids and land application.

The types of material they work with are Wood Ash, Short Paper Fiber (SPF) and Biosolids. Wood Ash is produced at biomass energy plants that burn clean wood to generate electricity. Wood Ash has a high lime equivalence that raises the pH of soils. Wood Ash also works well to neutralize odor-causing compounds in compost. Short Paper Fiber is a residual from the paper making process. It has a high clay content and can be recycled for many uses such as animal bedding and land fill closure projects. Biosolids are statutorily defined as any sludge derived from a sewage wastewater treatment plant that meets the standards for beneficial reuse specified by the NHDES.

Class A Biosolids contain no detectible levels of pathogens. Class B Biosolids are treated but still contain detectible levels of pathogens.

Biosolids are heavily regulated in New Hampshire. New Hampshire goes beyond what federal rules require. She compared the state and federal rules to show how much stricter the state regulations are.

She explained RMI's land application program. They work with local farmers to develop nutrient management plans that will determine if Biosolids, Wood Ash or SPF will fit their soil and crop needs. They only work with material that meets strict state and federal standards for recycling. RMI thoroughly evaluates soil needs, site limitations, and crop demands for every site. Best Management Practices are employed on site to ensure the proper use of residuals. They are applied to agricultural soils once a year in a manner similar to manures. These products provide a low cost alternative to expensive commercial fertilizers. The soil is tested quarterly. The State evaluates the initial quality then establishes a testing schedule over a calendar year.

Class A Biosolids are approved for general distribution and do not require State permits. Belmont's current ordinance requires a special exception to use these Biosolids. This takes too much time and resources for Class A Biosolids to be useful. They would like to see Belmont change their ordinance since there now are State statutes that are the most extensive in the country. She suggested that a specific notification requirement could be written into the ordinance requiring 72 hour written notice to the Land Use Department prior to Class A delivery.

Caroline Snyder of Citizens for Sludge-Free Land next presented her information. She said that neither the federal or state rules are protected. She noted incidences of that happening. In Greenland where there was the first sludge case someone died. Several aquifers were polluted in Hooksett and peoples' wells were impacted. She said that sewage sludge is a pollutant and it is called biosolids. The federal clean water act defines it as a pollutant.

Ms. Snyder told the members that they should keep the ordinance and make it much stricter. She said groundwater testing is not required after sludge is applied. Spreading sludge on farms is especially risky. Many of our soils are shallow, acidic and often excessively drained. The acidity mobilizes many of the metals in the sludge and are picked up by crops or plants. They do not stay in the soils. There is data that shows that this is not a sustainable practice. Property values will go down on the properties that use it and their abutting properties.

In many regions of the country she said it is being used as a fuel source. It can be used to make renewable energy. She stressed that it is important for NH towns to have local ordinances. She feels the regulations are so lenient. They also need the ordinance for liability indemnification.

Chairman Knowlton thanked them for coming and giving their presentations. He said the members need to be as knowledgeable about this as they can since the public will be asking them questions. The Conservation Commission members need to be able to deliver honest and unbiased information. C. Fairfield said it is beneficial to them to have all the links to the published literature on the subject.

GINGER WELLS-KAY:

K. Knowlton read an e-mail from D. Naiva thanking Ginger for her dedication and all the contributions she has made as a member of the Conservation Commission. He then presented her with a card and gift from the members who also thanked her.

BOARD'S ACTION-MINUTES:

Chairman Knowlton appointed M. McLetchie as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

MOTION: On a motion by K. Bennett, seconded by C. Fairfield, the members voted to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2009 meeting as written. (4-0)

STAFF REPORT:

GRANT:

R. Ball is looking into a grant by the NH Aquatic Research Mitigation Program that could be used to help pay for conservation easements. It could be used to pay for the easement on the Tioga River Wildlife & Conservation Area.

TOWN FOREST:

R. Ball is going to have the Huot Technical Center build the bridge for \$1,600. He will order the beaver barrier which costs \$575 and the outlet at the end will cost about \$300. They will then need to buy the dirt material and riprap.

BELLETETE PROPERTY- MAP 111 LOT 052:

R. Ball said he is currently working with DES on this property. They have taken down all the trees between their house and Lake Winnisquam. He did receive a permit that allowed him to put a 6 foot wide path down to his dock but has done more than that. R. Ball showed the members pictures he has taken of the property.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: On a motion by K. Bennett, seconded C. Fairfield , it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. (4-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Rollins

