

Open ONelson Conservation Commission
Meeting October 8, 2015
Minutes

Draft

Kathy Schillemat called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Present were Kathy Schillemat, Rick Church, Judith Putzel, Dave Patek, Tom Newcombe, and Susan Hansel (alternate and selectman's representative).

Kathy Schillemat Asked for consideration of the minutes of the September meeting. Tom Newcombe moved approval and Dave Patek seconded his motion. All voted in favor.

2016 Budget discussion:

Kathy indicated an initial budget and any warrant articles the commission needs are due to the Selectmen by 10/21. The 2015 budget was \$1065 and we have spent \$687.88 year to date. The favorable budget balance was, largely, due to the fact that none of our members attended the annual meeting of Conservation Commissions this year. We spent about \$238 on materials to support our LWCF Grant in 2015 and some of that will be non-recurring.

Anne McBride (alternate) joined the meeting at 7:04

Rick Church moved that NCC submit a budget for 2016 in the amount of \$1,000. Tom seconded the motion and it passed.

Bradshaw conservation opportunity:

Rick reported that Jack Bradshaw had approached him with the objective of seeing whether the NCC would be interested in helping him protect the wetland on his property that borders the Nelson Road. He is suggesting donating the land to the Town of Nelson. Rick told Jack that true protection would require a third party to hold an easement. The Town already has an easement of part of the land and has a leach field there. Rick will meet again with Jack to learn more details.

Quabbin to Cardigan (Q2C) Grant opportunity:

Anne Explained that we had missed the opportunity to apply for funds, but that all funds had not been expended and that there would be a final "mini round" with applications open Oct 15th; due on November 30; decided on December 10th. The Harris Center had offered to do the application for us, but there was a misunderstanding and they only wrote a grant for their costs. They have received partial funding.

Anne offered to write a grant for NCC to include costs for our appraisal and closing costs. Kathy is meeting on the budget with the Harris Center and will get a full

picture of uncovered costs and forward those to Anne for the grant. The grant would reimburse us for costs and requires a 25% match from us.

Tolman land conservation easement terms:

Most of the meeting was devoted to this topic as NCC prepares to negotiate the terms of the conservation easement between the Town of Nelson and the Harris Center that will accompany the purchase of the Tolman property on Osgood and Hurd hills.

In the approximately 1½ hour discussion, many points were made. Here follow some of them:

The easement should make specific reference to the requirements of the LWCF Grant Application. Rick will try to find appropriate words from the application to use. This might be in the beginning of the document.

The discussion focused on determining what we agreed would be prohibited by the easement, what would be under the sole control of the Town of Nelson and what would be subject to a management plan requiring agreement between the Harris Center and the Town. There were many items in the draft easement that NCC members felt should be at the Town's sole discretion.

The general subjects discussed were Habitat Management, Agriculture, Water Extraction, Education, Recreation and Public Access. The draft easement was marked up, particularly identifying items that should be under the sole control of the Town of Nelson. There was a discussion of parking lot size and location. The group felt the parking lot off Brickyard Road should be the bigger one and the one on Homestead Lane perhaps big enough for 5 cars.

Kathy and Anne will meet with the Harris Center to present our recommendations for changes to the easement draft. We expect to have another meeting to refine the easement further.

Warrant Articles for Town Meeting:

Kathy and Tom suggested two:

RSA 36-A:4 II b allows towns that adopt the rule to authorize their conservation commissions to expend money to qualified organizations for the purpose of acquiring property or facilitating transactions where the Town does NOT acquire a legal interest. (Currently the NCC may do this but the Town must acquire a legal interest in the subject property.) Kathy will draft the article in concert with the Town Administrative Assistant.

Restoring the Conservation Fund and replacing the Partridge Trust

Tom reported that a vote of Town Meeting in 1994 allowed the selectmen to receive and expend funds from grants. The LWCF grant will cover the half the cost of acquiring the restricted fee interest in the Tolman property and obligate to Town to construct 2 parking lots (\$15,000), erect two kiosks (\$3,000) and create a forestry management plan (\$12,000). As NCC will be emptying the Conservation Fund and the Sidney Partridge Trust to acquire the Tolman land and the Town will receive reimbursement for these costs from the LWCF grant, Tom suggested a warrant article establishing a new expendable trust to replace the Partridge Fund. The warrant article would direct the selectmen to transfer the reimbursement from the

grant to the two funds, fully restoring the Conservation Fund and placing the balance in the new expendable trust with terms similar to those of the current Partridge Fund. The NCC asked Tom to draft the article in concert with the Town Administrative Assistant.

Fund Raising:

Kathy reported that she is leading an effort to raise \$12,000 to offset the costs of Nelson's part of the Tolman acquisition not covered by the balances in our two funds. She has received a gift of \$1,000 already. She asked NCC members to consider contributing. The Harris Center is conducting a drive to raise \$100,000 for its part. Kathy gave each NCC member a copy of the brochure supporting the fund drive. The brochure contains several errors. One: Checks for donations should be made out to the Town of Nelson with a note that it is for the Tolman Land acquisition.

Other business:

The selectmen need to agree and sign the purchase and sale agreement with the Harris Center for the Tolman property. Once that is signed, NCC will hold at least one public meeting on the project.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20PM

Rick Church
Secretary