

Nelson Conservation Commission
Meeting September 11, 2015
Minutes

Draft

Kathy Schillemat called the meeting to order at 7:03PM. Present were Kathy Schillemat, Rick Church, Dave Patek, Tom Newcombe, and Susan Hansel (alternate and selectman's representative).

Also present were Stephen Froling and Jeremy Wilson of the Harris Center

Stephen Froling made a brief report on the state of the negotiations with Ethan Tolman for the acquisition of approximately 588 acres on Osgood and Hurd Hills. Mr. Tolman and the Harris Center (HCCE) have signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement. The next step is for the Town of Nelson to sign such an agreement with HCCE. Stephen asked whether the Nelson Conservation Commission would like to proceed to get a "yellowbook appraisal" as required by the terms of the LWCF Grant.

Rick Church moved that the NCC hire the firm of McManus and Nault to perform such an appraisal per their quotation in the amount of \$6,900. Second: Dave Patek. Passed unanimously. Stephen Froling will contact Peter Nault of the above firm to start the process.

Stephen Froling then asked if he should direct Dick Drew, whom HCCE has hired to conduct a survey of part of the Tolman property, to blaze an unmarked boundary for the land. The consensus was that we should do this to make the line easier to follow for future monitoring and other purposes.

Kathy Schillemat moved to go into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 for the purpose of discussing land acquisition. The motion was seconded by Tom Newcombe and passed.

Here follow the minutes of that session:

A discussion ensued of Nelson and HCCE funding for the Tolman land acquisition. The funding for the Nelson side of the project has always been intended to be the Partridge Fund and the LWCF grant proceeds. Because Nelson will not receive the grant funding until after it has acquired the restricted fee interest in the property and can't borrow money without approval of Town Meeting, it has been the plan to use all of the money (less an allowance for lawyer's and appraiser's fees) in the Partridge Fund (approx. \$261,000) and the Conservation Fund (approximately \$39,000) to purchase the property. As the NCC has previously voted \$225,000 from the Partridge Fund and all of the proceeds from the LWCF Grant (\$150,000) for a total of \$375,000 for its share of the project, the question becomes: how to get grant money to NCC to pay some of the costs

incurred by HCCE on its behalf. It should be noted that the total of \$375,000 includes \$30,000 in costs for improvements to the property required by the terms of the grant.

Tom Newcombe and Edie Drinkwater have been exploring this issue. The selectmen, in accepting the LWCF Grant money on behalf of the Town, will vote to accept with restrictions that the money may only be used for this project. Tom can work with them in the language. Any balance not used for costs associated with the project may be paid back into the Conservation Fund enabling the NCC to honor its obligations to HCCE. Rick questioned whether that can be done without approval of the Town Meeting. Tom and Edie will pursue this with DRA.

Jeremy Wilson informed the meeting that HCCE was applying for a grant to cover transaction costs from the Quabbin to Cardigan Collaborative and that NCC could also. He will forward details.

Next step: Meet with the Nelson Selectmen at 5PM on 9/16 to review and sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement with HCCE. Kathy asked that the town attorney be present for that meeting. Susan Hansel said she would try to set up that meeting.

The meeting returned to open session at 8:25PM
Members of NCC determined that there as no need to seal the minutes of the above non-public session. Rick made a motion NOT to seal the above minutes. Kathy seconded and all members voted for the motion. Regular business resumed at that time.

Kathy reminded members that there is a NHACC Annual meeting on 11/7 and that anyone wishing to attend should register.

Kathy shared a letter fro Anita Flanagan of the Granite Lake Host program thanking the Town of Nelson for its support of the program and reporting another successful year. It was suggested that Anita might be asked to write a Grapevine article about the project.

Susan Hansel brought up a suggestion made by Sandy McKenzie that the town employ a forester to mark the 17 acre town property next to hers for a selective cut. The property was last cut 30 years ago. There is a similar piece between the Gerbis property and Buzz Laughlin's. Dave Patek suggested that that later piece not be cut as it forms an important scenic part of the center of the town. A discussion ensued about the desirability of developing management objectives for town owned land. NCC will have to develop such objectives for the piece we are acquiring in Osgood and Hurd Hills.

Kathy then led a discussion on the need to hold public meetings (one a formal public hearing) on the acquisition and future use of the land we are acquiring on Osgood and Hurd Hills. We should schedule those hearings when we meet with the selectmen. The first will likely be in October as it must be held before NCC may expend Conservation Fund money of the acquisition project. Broad public input will be sought and other aspects of the project as well. In this regard, Kathy passed around a copy of the environmental site assessment performed for HCCE on the Tolman property.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15

Rick Church
Secretary