

Town of Bolton
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway, Bolton VT 05676

802-434-5075

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

May 16th, 2016 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Conservation Commission members present: Amy Ludwin, Steve McLeod, Ali Kosiba, Jerry Mullen, Lars Botzjorns

Conservation Commission members absent: Virginia

Also present: Rob Mullen and Bonnie Mullen, and Matt Mead

Minutes

1. Review, and additions, minutes of the April 18, 2016 meeting . Additions for the past minutes: none _Approval of Past Minutes ~ Amy raised a motion to pass the minutes. Jerry seconded. All in favor (5-0).

2. Additions or deletions to the agenda.

Steve raised motion to cut items from the agenda. Amy seconded. Ali suggested that we cap the meeting at 8 pm, sharp and try to wrap up by 7:50 to adjourn by 8 pm.
Amy called a vote. All were in favor (5-0).

Amy wants a secretary to help take notes.

3. Public Comments

Amy asked if there are any public comments from the three public members. There are none.

4. Modified Roberts Rules of Order- Jerry.

These rules state that for groups less than 12 people, the committee chair can make motions. Jerry suggested that we adopt those modified rules. All in favor, passed 5-0.

5. COI question; Does anyone have a potential or possible conflict of interest issue for the group to review about any of the topics that are on the agenda for the meeting today?

None

6. PPCA MP:

7a. Petition, re: wording of draft of section 8.2.1 Lars summary.

Edits to MP:

1.2 (p. 6) altered wording of Purpose and Attributes to ensure that long term timber management would not supersede wildlife management

5.8.2 trail maintenance has waiver form town of Bolton for all town volunteers.

Only need to sign form one time and have on record.

8.2 was updated as an appendix for trapping rules. Trapping would be on a request basis, with town residents given a priority.

Jerry proposes that onsite assessment of trapping originates from the BCC. Ali seconds that.

Lars suggests that we can agree on changes based on consensus, rather than vote. Agreement from whole group.

Majority agree that we the CC should initiate biologist input on trapping if input is something we want. Passed.

Steve has a proposal for amendments to draft PPCA MP (see handout). Steve noted that he removed all wording about 'compelling conservation need' removed from the criteria of trapping. He thinks that if we leave this in, trapping will never happen. There is worry that if there was a conservation need there will be a lot of debate in town.

It was noted that if there is a compelling conservation need, the process for obtaining a trapper will be streamlined.

Steve noted that a conservation need may not appear on the land for decades, and that trapping is a valid recreational activity.

Amy noted that we are not trying to ban trapping in Bolton, but that our goal is to be looking only at this small parcel of land that is a designated conservation area. She supports having a defined conservation need before trapping.

Discussion about habitat connectivity and high human use of the property. There is a lot of wildlife viewing at PP. We're not against trapping on other properties or in the town, and could be in support of trapping when/if there is a need for it at PPCA, and want trapping to be used specifically for conservation goals only.

Steve says that he may bring it to the Selectboard if the rest of the BCC doesn't agree with his amendments.

Steve made a motion to vote on adopting his amendments. Jerry seconds. Steve's amendments do not pass (1 yea :Steve McLeod -4 nays :all others attending).

5.4 Amy proposes to change 'will' to 'shall'. Group agrees to that.

8.2.1 Amy proposes to change subtitle to 'criteria for requesting and approving applications', group agreed to this . Discussed application for trapping is appendix in the PPMP. Matt Mead didn't have any objections to this application form. Group is fine with that form. SB can ask for more detailed info if they were to want it. Amy wants to include that the SB will have in writing from the BCC whatever specific recommendations are re:conservation need for trapping and why. So they will know what the CC is asking for trapping for. Group is ok with that. Amy asked Matt about leg hold traps. He said that while he wouldn't use them, they can be used safely. He also noted that if there is a conservation need, waiting until until ice on the ponds might be detrimental. Lars suggested that maybe if there is a nuisance animal, we could allow trapping whenever, even outside of trapping season as Matt noted, but that we would have to sign the area well for public notice. We agreed to take out the wording that says traps have to be under ice if in water to allow for flexibility in case of need. Group agrees to all of the suggested and discussed changes noted in 8.2.1.

Jerry made a motion to approve the PPMP, Amy seconded. Passed (4 yea; Ali Kosiba, Gerrard Mullen, Lars Botzjoorns, Amy Ludwin -1 nay;Steve McLeod).

Lars will pass the PPMP to the SB (via Amy Grover), Jerry noted that it will need to be made public to town. Amy ok'd delegating this task to Lars (communication to SB about MP and attendance at meeting).

Update on map by Leslie — in Cara Montgomery's hands right now, will be updated soon.

7b. PPCA Management plan review. Lars will reach out to SB and attend meeting on that.

7c. & PPCA - public comment process, SB review process. Designated point person for. Lars is so designated.

7. Floodplain Inventory update, beginning the process. Point person designation; Amy for now, Jerry possible interest. Contract with Arrowwood, Amy. Landowner letter review, Virginia.

Amy has been in touch with Arrowwood, has in hand a modified proposal, shared that with the group.

Amy also submitted a proposal for a Tiny Grant from AVCC, \$600 to get more field work hours, we'll hear about that in June.

June 30th our Town budget line will expire, we have over \$500 in our budget now. Amy Grover said that the town can mail our letters to floodplain landowners. Amy L. wants to request money from our budget to cover that mailing, and for a good final map and final floodplain report, possible more field hours? Lars asked if this needs to be spent from this fiscal year or just earmarked. We could use FY16 money for mailing and first pass for Arrowwood floodplain inventory. Amy makes a motion to do so as Lars proposed, Jerry seconded. All in favor (5-0).

Lars noted that there is also another \$70-80 for trail work, from a grant he has from last year, that could cover trail signs. Ali will consider using that at PPCA later this year for signs. Our most pressing need now is the floodplain inventory.

Amy made a meeting with the Arrowwood people, 6:30 June 6th. If a quorum is present, we have to advertise that it is an official BCC meeting. Does anyone want to work on this project? Ali, Jerry, Lars will attend that meeting. Jerry may want to take a more active role, or not: but will decide later. We hope Virginia will attend as she'd been working on landowner letter, and may be able to help with that if she'd like to? Amy will be point person for now on Floodplain inventory.

Ali made a motion to prohibit commercial harvest of fiddle head ferns on town land in floodplain area. She noted that there had been heavy harvest at the Sarah Holbrook property. She thinks that commercial harvesting can decimate the ostrich fern population, and over harvest can limit the enjoyment for people to harvest for their own enjoyment. We also co-signed a letter last year with the RCC to ask restaurants and markets to not buy fiddleheads from undocumented sources. Jerry seconded. Passed (4-1, Steve opposed). Ali will take this to the Selectboard to request their approval.

8. FOW May events - Jerry secured a room at school for May event. No updates. Amy will post info. on FPF for next event late May. Driveway and Private road runoff workshop at Smilie School 5/26, we are sponsoring with FOW.

9. Our budget, FY 2105-16 July 1- June 30, Fy end goals. Possible more funds to Floodplain Inventory depending on how that works out.

Discussed current \$ in conservation Fund.

Wheeler Field update by Jerry — he's still willing to act as liaison for this. This relates to the budget, because the Friends of Wheeler Field may seek out money for a purchase using conservation fund money. The protocol is that we, the BCC, needs to approve use of the conservation funds. Then if we approved it, next an application would go to the SB.

Jerry talked about his idea of a primitive biathlon idea, use muzzle loaders and snow shoes. for fund raising and fun. Parking is an issue! and foot traffic access, would have to park on one side of the road. We would need port a potties and other infrastructure. This might be something that Bolton Valley would be interested in? Jerry will look into this, the sites in Town that might be easier to access and able to cope with parking and other group planning needs.

10. New members outreach - Amy

Amy will do this soon. FPF posting. Limit on BCC is 9 members.

11. Items for next meeting agenda:
June 6th at 6 for Floodplain kick off

Next scheduled meeting is Sept 19th
next is Dec 5th.

If we need a meeting before then we can arrange.

On agenda for next meeting is to talk about: increased rainfall that is a planning issue.

12. Other communications/mail

13. Adjournment , Steve moves to adjourn, 2nd by Jerry, so moved, approved by all.

Also on our list for future follow up :

ATV at PPCA

Forms for PPCA volunteers, where to store, who will track.- Ali

CLF act 64 presentation; future date?

Designated liaisons with partner organizations

Wheeler Field Update- Jerry following this.

COI CC policy?

Extreme rain events (Ali) and what we could do as a town, possibly with a partnership with Richmond CC.

Ali Kosiba__Acting Note Taker, for the Conservation Commission

These minutes are unofficial until accepted.

These minutes were read and accepted by a quorum of the Conservation Commission on:

7/11/16
Amy F. Judson

For the Conservation Commission