

Town of Milton

Conservation Commission



PO Box 310
424 White Mountain Highway
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(p)603-652-4501
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2/1/2023
Meeting Minutes
6:00PM

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Virginia Long (Chair), Steve Panish, Robert Weiss, Wayne Sylvester, Sharon Buttrick, Alternate Jeff LeClair

Virginia Long, Chair, opened the public session at 6:00PM.

- 1.) **Ascertain who is present and approve alternates to serve as full members if needed.** Alternate Sharon Buttrick was approved to serve as member at this meeting.
- 2.) **Event announcements:** Virginia read through the upcoming events.
- 3.) **Display/Circulate CC materials for lending (sign-out sheet):** The new NH Municipal Conservation Handbook is now available.
- 4.) **Review/Approve 1/4/2023 meeting minutes:**

1/4/2023 minutes: Steve – *motion to approve the 1/4/2023 minutes with corrections. Seconded by Sharon. Sharon, Bob, Virginia, Steve and Wayne voted to approve; the motion was approved.*

- 5.) **Financial Report:** Steve – we were \$279.00 under budget for 2022. Nothing was used out of the Conservation Fund. Finally got the 2022 land use change tax; MCC portion was \$33,000 – this goes into the Conservation Fund. As the year ending 2021 is still being audited, the land use change tax for that year has not yet been received.
Steve – currently we have 3 accounts; does it make sense to have just one account? He thinks it makes sense to have just one or two. There is no problem with combining monies from the funds. Wayne suggested keeping them separate based on Barrington as an example. Steve – based on the discussion he will not do anything at this point.

Virginia said it would help to know how much of next year's budget is not already applied to something.

- 6.) **Wetlands and Shoreland Permit Applications or Violations:** There were none to discuss.
- 7.) **Wetlands Protections:**
 - a.) Discuss which points to include in letter to landowners about wetlands: They will refine the letter to help people understand what wetlands look like; where they stop and start; important points to include in letter including the town & state regs. Discussion – should this go to all residents, those who live closer to the wetlands or just abutters? First, I need to determine how many letters will get sent and associated costs. Sharon – does this include Salmon Falls River wetland and around the lake or would they get a separate letter? Virginia recommends sticking to what most people think of wetlands, such as marshes. Wayne – maybe the TPPA Board would agree to send the letter to residents around the lake. Virginia – can we ask the town about increasing the buffer and get better protections about the town wetlands? Steve – the point of the letter is to get residents interested in the whole idea of wetlands.

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Virginia will work on the letter and bring another draft to the next meeting.

b.) Consider proposing revisions to zoning ordinance to better protect wetlands and steep slopes in Milton: For the zoning ordinance, should we concentrate on just four priorities to increase the buffer on or all of them? Steve thinks it's best to start smaller and also talking with Bruce. Wayne questioned if the planning board is interested in expanding the buffer zone and it would be good to talk to both Karen Golab and Bruce.

c.) Write letter to state reps about relevant bills in legislature.

- 8.) **Trail Volunteers Group Update:** Jeff – it's quiet right now. He received an email from Deb McCormack who is interested in volunteering at Casey Rd. Jeff asked about volunteers signing waiver forms. Virginia said this is especially important when working with equipment.

9.) **Town-owned Easements and Conservation Lands:**

FEE PROPERTIES

Jones Brook Park/Payne – letter of understanding between MMRG & Town: Wayne – motion to advise the BOS to sign the letter; seconded by Steve. All were in favor; the motion approved.

Old Ski Area – update on plan to get deed restriction: Get this onto the BOS agenda.

Ball Property – survey work report and need for more work: Chris Jacobs sent a letter to encroachers on the Ball property. Will wait to see what the response is. Last year, the MCC sent letters to landowners with town-held easements. She would like to send similar letter again this year to those owners whose land abuts town-owned land.

EASEMENTS: Oversee with Chris Kane monitoring.

Lancey Ward: this is a 3-acre easement around wetland. Recent monitoring report indicates difficulty following the boundaries previously put in. Virginia will ask Chris Kane to go and find all 16 stakes and amend the baseline to make more understandable.

Liberty Circle: This is 11-acres which abuts Casey Road. Chris Kane had some difficulty following the boundaries.

Kane Conservation/Monitoring: Need to get prices from Chris K. for needed extra work. Should he be asked to monitor the town-owned properties for next year – this year the MCC did some of the monitoring. Steve – we should keep monitoring at least some of the more manageable ones. Virginia – there are five properties – maybe do them every other year? Bob said he would do the Dames Brook. Virginia and Sharon will do a couple together. Wayne disagrees while others recommend continuing for at least one more year.

-New monitoring form: Chris K. sent a sample form which is not really liked by the members. They like the criteria on the current form with check boxes and space for comments; it's easier to follow and less complicated. Virginia likes having the information/summary on Chris' forms. Steve said that could be added to the MCC form. Jeff agrees and likes the simplicity of their form. Bob – this is a good way for the MCC to remain connected to the properties. Virginia – there doesn't seem to be consensus on what Chris should use for the monitoring report and recommends combining the two forms. Steve and Sharon will work to combine.

- 10.) **MCC Bylaws revision:** The last time the bylaws were revised was in 2007. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

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- 11.) **Recruitment of new Commission and Alternate members:** Virginia asked how best to retain the old members and attract new ones. Having a bird walk and inviting the public is one idea.
- 12.) **Other business:** The walking trails map will be added to the town's annual report.
- 13.) **Confirm next meeting date: Wednesday, March 1, 6:00PM.** For the March meeting, Kearsarge Solar will attend and present. They are proposing two solar projects and they want to talk with the MCC. Steve – they are looking to avoid MCC opposition to the two solar farms.
- 14.) **Adjourn:**

Steve – motioned to adjourn at 7:50PM. Wayne – seconded the motion. All were in favor; the meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.