

Town of Milton

Conservation Commission



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8/3/2022

Meeting Minutes

6:00PM

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Virginia Long (Chair), Steve Panish, Robert Weiss, Deb McCormack, Alternate Jeff LeClair.
Commissioner Wayne Sylvester and Alternate Sharon Buttrick were absent.

Public: Veronica Bodge – Land Agent for MMRG

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.** . (Jeff LeClair appointed to vote in place of Wayne Sylvester)
- 2.) **Welcome to guests in attendance:** Veronica Bodge, MMRG
- 3.) **Veronica Bodge**, New Land Agent MMRG: Veronica introduced herself and discussed her role as Land Agent for MMRG and what MMRG offers to the MCC and the town. She will help facilitate land projects, stewardship and monitoring and can help get volunteers. MMRG can help work with landowners to discuss what conservation options are available for their properties. MMRG is planning a mixer (Jan-Feb 2023) and will invite all commissions to participate in the potluck/roundtable discussions. Included is Milton, Farmington, New Durham, Brookfield, Wolfeboro, Tuftonboro, Ossipee, Middleton and Wakefield. Veronica questioned if MCC had anything to add to her list; Virginia sent the list prior to the meeting. Deb – want to focus on increasing town's people interest in conservation. Bob – important to stay consistent and fair in decision-making process. Virginia – focus on which properties are most important for conservation especially focused on wetlands. Steve – interested in available resources; preserving habitats to create contiguous tracks of land; unmanaged properties or managed as wilderness forest; acknowledge previously-made mistakes. Information on grants would be very useful; best way to manage properties where people are dumping yard waste, etc. What is CC's enforcement powers? Need to be some way to enforce these situations. Jeff – received an alarming letter – NE Vacant land – he would like the town to stay rural. Virginia – questioned the prospect of getting an easement on the Old Ski area? Veronica – the property currently does not hold enough value (lesser than other properties). Could possibly be considered in the future. Virginia – is it a matter of money or just the value? Veronica – it's not a strong enough resource value as compared to other properties. Steve – Developing the property would be detrimental, as it has steep slopes above the 3-ponds and is an important part of the viewshed from the village, ponds, and across the water. Mr. Cheney has expressed interest in the property. Veronica – MMRG would not be offended if MCC talked to SELT about the property. Virginia thanked Veronica for attending and providing great information.
- 4.) **Event announcements:** MMRG WWW Festival and TPPA annual meeting.
- 5.) **Display/Circulate CC materials for lending (sign-out sheet):** Handbook for CC, State of NH Birds, AMC Trails Maintenance Book.
- 6.) **Review/Approve 7/6/2022 meeting minutes:**

7/6/2022 minutes: Steve – motion to approve the 7/6/2022 minutes with corrections. Seconded by Bob. All were in favor; the motion was approved.



- 45 **7.) Prime Wetlands Designation:** RFP to contract wetland scientist – Virginia – contacted NHDES who
46 referred her to town of Pelham who recently did re-designation of prime wetlands; looking for
47 information on grants, costs, RFPs. Virginia recommends using the previously-done study – perhaps have
48 a scientist review the information. Focus on Fish Pond and Gould Pond (concern – Mr. Cheney has
49 bought property near Gould Pond). Important to determine the priorities of the town and the focus on
50 wetlands – water quality, recreation, education, etc. Deb – are towns allowed to base prime wetlands on
51 their own criteria? Virginia – it's a combination of both the individual town along with state criteria. The
52 point of designating property as a prime wetland is to give it additional protections. There is a lot of
53 information already – maybe now we just need a scientist to review all of it. Both Mark West and Rick
54 Van de Poll were recommended by NHDES. Jeff – what about the heron rookery? Virginia – half of the
55 property has a conservation easement; maybe the other half although there is not a whole lot of risk of
56 development. Virginia questioned how to proceed – tentatively add the heron rookery? Should we have
57 a session focusing specifically on which ones to add to a list? Steve – there is no budget to really hire
58 someone to look at all the data. Virginia – there may be grants available for something like this. Steve –
59 a reminder the town would have to approve this. Virginia – does it make sense to have them all together
60 for a vote or to separate each one? Steve – would probably be better to have them separate.
61 Virginia reported NHDES will have wetlands workshop for CCs that will be helpful; Virginia is doubtful all
62 of this can be accomplished prior to the next town vote. Steve – for right now, members should look at
63 the table of properties – recommend each member determine their top four and then compare. Can
64 then put a packet together for a wetlands scientist to review and recommend which one would be the
65 best candidate to move forward. Deb questioned the timeframe to do this? Virginia replied by next
66 month's meeting. Virginia will draft a RFP letter for discussion at the next meeting.
- 67 **8.) Wetlands and Shoreland Permit Applications or Violations:**
- 68 **9.) Report on MCC-sponsored MS4 educational outreach event on July 9th:** Virginia brought thank you
69 cards for members to sign.
- 70 **10.) Financial Report, Budget:**
71 Steve: There have been no budget expenditures and no changes to the fund bank statement.
72
- 73 Jeff – Motion to approve financial report. Seconded by Deb. All were in favor; the motion was approved.
74
- 75 **11.) Town of Milton trails map to be created by Peter Goodwin:** Virginia questioned if there were any
76 additional changes to the map? All were OK with the map. Virginia will bring the backsheet for review at
77 the next meeting.
- 78 **12.) Trails Volunteer Group:** Jeff reported he and Mike Schneider looked at Casey Road and discussed a
79 potential loop trail. Jones Brook - have been spraying to kill the poison ivy – vinegar seems to be
80 working. He reported this should be a good fishing spot. He questioned the possibility of a site walk at
81 Jones Brook. Jeff discussed contacting Pat Smith about signage placement so they do not get hit by
82 plows.
- 83 **13.) Town-owned Easements and Conservation Lands:**
84 **Easements:** Kane will begin monitoring in late September.
85 **Town-owned properties:** Virginia will reach out to SELT to begin discussion of Old Ski area.
86 Jones Brook – MMRG likes the project and will be putting their budget together. Jill from MMRG will
87 contact MCC for discussion around next steps.
88 Ball property – putting together the monitoring report. Deb and Bob reported they walked across Micah
89 Terrace to the river and did not find any pins.

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Virginia wrote letter to abutters of Dames Brook. All thought the letter was good and Virginia will send out.

Stewardship walk for September – Jones Brook – either 9/10 or 9/17 @ 8:30AM.

14.) Casey Road Conservation Land updates (Jeff).

15.) Educational Outreach: TPPA, Facebook, Other: MS4 materials, list of town conservation lands.

16.) Update on Sam Plummer Rd Culvert Project: Natural Heritage Bureau - did recon to look for small whorled pogonia; Joel DeStasio update: engineering work done so cost estimate also done, cost is almost twice original, TU has applied for a \$100k grant, Alena will apply for Moose Plate grant,, a couple others.. project will be delayed by 1 year, more relaxed time frame to do DES wetland application, plan is to do project in phases so no need to do temporary bridge, less impact on abutting landowners' land

17.) Update on Northeast Pond Condo Development.

18.) Update on Recruitment of new alternate Commission members: There was no update.

19.) Update on status of 3.04-acre parcel (tax lot 41/81) abutting Casey Rd Conservation Land: No update.

20.) Update on organizing MCC Files at Town Hall: No update.

21.) Public input:

22.) Other Business:

23.) Confirm next meeting date: Wednesday, September 7, 6:00PM.

24.) Adjourn:

Steve – motioned to adjourn at 8:20PM. Bob – seconded the motion. All were in favor; the meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.