

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting- January 15, 2015
Minutes Approved- February 19, 2015

Present: Valerie Germain, Joe MacGregor, Jon Manley

Valerie Germain called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

1. Minutes
 - a. The minutes from the December 18, 2014 meetings were approved as written.
2. Old Business
 - a. Snowmobile Trail-
 - i. A letter was received from Mr. Livingston requesting regarding a snowmobile trail to the Toll Booth Tavern. Administrator French has sent out a letter to invite him to a Conservation Commissioners meeting.
 - b. Trail Maintenance saw-
 - i. The system has been ordered. The invoice was submitted on last year's budget. Tyler's will set it all up and winterize it.
 - c. Railroad Trestle-
 - i. Jon has sent a letter to the trail division regarding the bridge only being open during snowmobile season. They directed him to Department of Transportation. The trestle is considered active, which means no one should be walking on it. Jon will inquire with DOT what it would take to have the bridge open all year long.
 - d. After School Science Program
 - i. Valerie reported the after school program began yesterday and 9 students are signed up. This session is focused on tracking in the forest. Valerie reported that Fish and Game had provided tracking identification cards.
 - ii. The Harris Center will be contacted regarding the possibility of borrowing plastic tracks.
 - iii. The Commissioners would like to thank Stephanie Mackesy and her family for helping with the program and providing snacks.
 - iv. Joe received a call from the Town Administrator regarding how money for the program would be distributed, the number of weeks the \$500 covers, etc. It was asked if Val would be considered a Town employee. The Commissioners viewed the program facilitator position as a contracted service. Valerie will contact the Administrator regarding the questions.
 - e. Timber Cut Conservation Funding Bill
 - i. Jon reported that there is legislation coming up for when land comes out of current use that will give the town the option to put money aside for conservation.

3. New Business

a. Goals

- i. Joe would like to designate meetings for work sessions to create town-wide maps that show lots, properties, ownership, land use, gravel, timber, etc. It was noted that there is a Hazard Mitigation Map from July 2007 created by Southwest Regional. Southwest Regional and Granite will be contacted, along with the different Town boards to see if anyone has maps that would show some of this information already.
- ii. Valerie would like to work on the natural resources inventory. The Commissioners wonder if the town wide map would assist them in this project too.

b. Meeting facilitator

- i. It was proposed that for the year, members facilitate parts of the meeting on topics that are important to them. The Chairman would be in charge of setting the agenda and running the rest of the meeting, but this will help to keep all members involved. The Commissioners generated a list of topics that they are interested in. This will be tabled to the February meeting when all the members are in attendance.
 1. Jon- Liaison to River Committee
-Town land
 2. Joe- Town wide map project
 3. Valerie- After school club/Conservation Education
-Earth Day Coordinator
-Natural Resource inventory preliminary research
 4. John- Water resources?
 5. Steve- Invasive species?

c. Annual Report Summary-

- i. Valerie will draft a summary for the Town Annual Report. Items to be included in the summary are: ID stands, Education programs such as the story walk through the forest, Earth Day cleanup. Joe has pictures that could be included in the Annual Report.

d. New legislation-

- i. Jon reported that HB 250 regarding perambulation requirements is coming up.

There being no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Bartlett
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary