

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- May 18, 2017

Minutes Approved on- June 15, 2017

Present: Stephen Willette, Tom James, Jon Manley, Joe MacGregor, Mike Munhall

Guests: David McKenzie- Planning Board, Jeff Rose- Selectman and Planning Board, Jeff Littleton- Moosewood Ecological

Co-Chair Stephen Willette called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

1. Minutes
 - a. The minutes from the April 20, 2017 meeting were approved as written.
2. NRI Phase II
 - a. Chairman Stephen Willette made introductions.
 - b. Jeff Littleton reviewed his proposal from August 2016 and Phase I of the Natural Resources Inventory.
 - i. Phase I included the creation and updating of 7 maps. Jon Manley asked if there were areas in Town that may be good location for a well in Bennington. Jeff Littleton explained the gravel areas help to replenish the water levels.
 - ii. Phase II could include the development of two maps that were not included in Phase I – Agricultural Resources to look at three different types of soils which have the capacity of growing and are suitable for certain growths; and Forest Resources. Phase II would include the written narrative quantifying the information found that is included on the maps. Jeff could also include information from DES to identify areas of potential contamination from sources such as junk yards, landfills, old gas stations, etc.
 - c. Joe MacGregor asked Jeff Rose and David McKenzie if there was information that other Town Boards would find helpful to be included in this phase. It is hoped by the Conservation Commissioners that this tool can be used and implemented in future planning for the Town. David McKenzie notified the Commissioners that at the present time there is information and maps in the Master Plan. The maps created during the NRI Phase I were made in a resolution that allows for the creation of large maps. In looking to the future, Jeff Littleton stated that the NRI once created usually does not need major updating as much of the information will not change. Future work may include studies that complement the NRI instead.
 - d. Joe MacGregor asked Jeff Littleton asked if the end report will include recommendations or problem areas. This will help the Town Boards to plan for the future.
 - e. The budget for Phase II is \$2,900. Jeff Littleton will revise the scope of work and a timeline based upon the budget and tonight's discussion. The Commissioners confirmed the possibility of a community presentation in the fall.
 - f. The Commissioners thanked Jeff Littleton for the work he did during Phase I.

3. Earth Day
 - a. The Commissioners reported a low turnout during the breakfast around 30 to 40 people. It is hard to determine the turnout as not everyone attends the breakfast. The Commissioners will contact Greenfield regarding turnout their dinner had.
 - b. Roughly 80 bags of trash were collected. There were several individuals that cleaned up after the Earth Day event whose bag collections are not included in the total.
 - c. Harley Wilson was presented with the camper scholarship. Ronan Clough was unable to attend.
 - d. The Commissioners discussed inviting more community groups and organizations to help in the planning of Earth Day which hopefully will result in a sense of pride in taking care of their town. The Commissioners asked Jeff Rose to bring back to the Selectmen the idea of beautifying Bennington. Jeff Rose reported that William O'Connor from the Transfer Station has suggested educating the children of Bennington on recycling at the Transfer Station. The Commissioners will begin the planning for next year's Earth Day as early as January.
4. Perambulation
 - a. Stephen Willette reminded the Commissioners that the Hancock-Bennington perambulation is set for June 10, 2017 at 9 a.m. meeting at the VFW.
5. Town of Bennington 175th Anniversary
 - a. The Recreation Department has asked each committee about putting a float in the parade. As no one is available to drive the float in the parade, the Commissioners regretfully declined.
 - b. The Commissioners discussed setting up a table at the Rhubarb Festival. Jon Manley volunteered the use of his tent.
6. River Float
 - a. The date of June 24, 2017 at 9 a.m. was set for the town to participate in the River Float.
7. Drinking Water: Groundwater protection
 - a. Joe MacGregor contacted DES regarding the map showing Bennington not in the groundwater protection. DES will be looking into this and placing Bennington under this protection.
8. Library
 - a. The last few years, the Conservation Commissioners have working in conjunction with the GEP Dodge Library to promote different programs. This year, they are looking into a program on trout. The Commissioners will reach out to other committees in Town that may want to be involved in this program.

As there was no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Karen Belcher

Conservation Commission Recording Secretary