



Bennington Conservation Commission
December 21, 2023 6:30 PM at the Depot

Minutes

Call to order: 6:30PM

Attendance: Zach Allen, Jane Butler, Joe MacGregor, Jon Manley, Mike Munhall, Steve Willette.
Visitor: Resident

Minutes: From November's meeting approved unanimously on a motion by Jon Manley and second by Joe MacGregor.

Reports

- River Committee - Joe and Jon - Said that they brought up the Antrim Waterworks well and building construction on Balch Farm Road Extension.

Old Business

- 2024 Budget - There has been no questions about our budget request, so we are proceeding as if the request is approved.
- Whittemore Lake pollution - Since our last meeting, Jon had contacted John McGhee at NH Fish and Game who seemed surprised that they hadn't been informed of the contamination since Whittemore Lake is a "reclaimed lake." DES is doing ongoing testing and is now connected with Fish and Game. The most recent test indicates that the lake is free of the cyanobacteria.

New Business

- Annual Report approval - Zach had a few edits that were accepted then the Report was unanimously accepted on a motion from Jon and a second by Steve.
- Membership - Efforts have been made to contact a member of the commission. This will be decided at January's meeting.

- Calendar 2024 a couple of edits were made but it is a fluid document so there was no vote to accept.
- Civil War Talk - Town resident David Beck and Antrim resident Eric Tenney will give a talk about local involvement in the Civil War. The talk will be given at the Bennington Historical Society on Saturday, January 20 at 2:00 PM.
- Town resident issue was presented about a situation of danger to wetlands on North Bennington Road, discussed, and a motion to further investigate. It passed unanimously on a motion by Jon Manley and seconded by Joe MacGregor
- BCC Sign - This sign that had hung on the back of the Depot and was removed when the new kiosk was built two years ago will be offered to the new owner of the White Birch General Store to be used on the front of the building for notices of town interest.
- Professor Goodbee of Franklin Pierce University is given permission to explore the land across the river from the end of Bible Hill Road to see if there is any evidence of Native American settlements there. Permission from the Tenney family has been obtained.
- Begin Sausage Fest planning - more of this work will be done at the January meeting but we need to contact musicians for the event and plan to purchase more food than last year.
- Plan at property at map 3 lot 15 on Mountain Road to be a parking area for the Bennington Trail. Discussed what is necessary to present to the Board of Selectmen for their approval. Zach will follow up on it.
- Land Conservation Talk: Jane has been doing some research and found Eric Masterson of the Harris Center for Conservation Education in Hancock to do a presentation on the various ways to put land in conservation. We decided that Tuesday, March 19 at 7:00 PM would be a good time. We will also plan on it being Zoomed. Jane needs to contact Mr Masterson on his fee.
- A situation in which sawdust is being pushed into wetlands was brought up and it was decided that a letter to the property owner should be sent to ask for a desist of the action.
- We should encourage people to volunteer to monitor various environmental items for NHACC.

Upcoming Calendar Items to Note

- Civil War talk Saturday, January 20

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 on a motion from Steve Willette, seconded by Jane Butler

Next Meeting January 18

Recorded by Mike Munhall

- GOALS FOR 2024 - adopted October 19, 2023
 1. Establish a property conservation easement educational program to help residents decide to put their land into conservation or common use. Look into providing financial assistance to those wishing to do either.
 2. Make a greater effort to get a website operational.
 3. Perambulate Greenfield townline and complete the Deering townline.
 4. Monitor water quality in town waters and look into remediation of current issues.
 5. Continue work on the Bennington Trail and build a parking area at the trailhead.
 6. Do more educational programming on environmental issues and history.