

Minutes

**Kingston Conservation Commission**

4/8/2021

Meeting called to order at 6:52 pm via Zoom

Present: Evy Nathan, Marghi Bean, Linda Foss, Shaw Tilton, Bob Smith, Greg Senko, Geof Harris, Donald Briggs (Select Board ex officio)

Guests: Walt Roy, Jeff Sluder

Excused Absence: Elizabeth Mello, Melissa Butler

**Secretary's Report:**

Minutes were accepted as written. Motion by Evy, seconded by Marghi, all in favor.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Shaw presented the current bank account balances:

Conservation Fund: \$26,589.52

Forest Fund: \$5,232.70

Expenditures:

Year-to-date expenditures total \$149.28

Evy reported that \$59.17 was spent on public education and supplies for Pollinator Pathways.

Evy received an invoice for \$4,395 from FORECO for the Acorn and West Kingston Town Forest management plans. Evy suggested using \$600 from the 2020 Professional Services account and paying the remaining amount from the Forest Fund. Evy will contact Ron Klemarczyk to ask if some of the invoice could be paid upon completion of the timber sale. The vote to approve paying the invoice will be delayed until Evy can contact Mr. Klemarczyk.

**Correspondence:**

Vy Long sent an email proposing the installation of turtle crossing signs on Great Pond Road, stating that she and several other residents were willing to purchase the signs. Evy replied that signs and their placement must be approved by the Highway Department.

DES Supply Lines newsletter contained articles on USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service funding for programs to protect water sources in agricultural areas, cyanobacteria monitoring grant applications, and drought assistance for low-income homeowners.

### **New Business:**

New Boston Road tree removal in shoreland protection zone. Elizabeth reported that someone had been cutting trees next to the Powwow River to create a paddock for their horses. Evy and Chief Briggs spoke with the homeowner and explained Kingston's shoreland protection ordinance. Glen Greenwood confirmed that the tree removal was non-compliant and that the owner's next step would be to attend a public hearing to request a conditional use permit.

Kingston's Earth Day cleanup is scheduled for April 10. Bags and gloves will be available to volunteers at the police station.

Bakie School path maintenance. Evy asked for a volunteer to remove a small tree across the Bakie School path.

Checklist for Planning Board comments. Shaw presented the checklist, which is a fillable PDF document including links to town and state ordinances and other reference documents.

### **Planning Board, DES, OEP:**

Saddle-Up Saloon. New plans to improve stormwater and snowmelt runoff. While the proposed snow storage area is adjacent to Mill Pond, the area which is now grass will be changed to crushed stone over sand to improve drainage. In addition, a detention pond designed to handle 10-year rain events has been added to accommodate runoff from the "event" parking lot.

Comment: While this proposal is an improvement over the current design, it will require a long-term maintenance plan to ensure continued effective stormwater management. Chief Briggs said that monitoring this would be one of the responsibilities of the new compliance officer.

### **Trails Subcommittee:**

ATV training. Greg, Bob, Geof and Brad Maxwell have completed the ATV training course. The next step is to receive equipment training from the Highway Department.

Frye Town Forest. On March 20, a work crew removed the large hazard tree in Frye Town Forest, as well as several other smaller trees. A work session is scheduled for May 1 to assess the rebuilding of the bog bridges.

Valley Lane Town Forest. A work session is scheduled for April 17 to assess bridge repair and trail re-routing.

Sargent Property. Greg will schedule a site walk with Krista Helmboldt of the Nature Conservancy to review the proposed parking area and ask for approval.

Noyes Property. A work session is scheduled for April 24 to finalize trail re-route plans.

Kiosks. Peter Coffin has prepared a cost estimate for kiosks.

### **Pollinator Pathways Subcommittee:**

- The Atkinson Conservation Commission will host a milkweed seed giveaway on April 10 at Freshwater Farms.
- The Kensington Conservation Commission will hold a seed giveaway at the Grange Hall on April 17.
- Evy will host a spring ephemeral wildflower walk on May 1.
- Pollinator Pathways will hold a plant sale during Kingston Days.

Zoom license. Evy made a motion for the Conservation Commission to purchase a one-year Zoom license for \$149.90, to be paid from the Public Education account. The Select Board approved the CC's purchase of this license to use for meetings and presentations. Motion seconded by Bob, all in favor.

### **Old Business:**

Manuel property public access. Rich St, Hilaire, Chief Briggs, Greg, and Jeff held a meeting to discuss Manuel property access issues and clarify the status of Green Road and Lake Road. Rich said that while the town owns both Lake Road to the Fidler property line and Green Road to the Murphy property line, they are both Class 6 roads so the town cannot maintain them.

Since Green is not wide enough to be converted to Class 5, Rich proposed an alternate plan to accommodate car top public access to Country Pond. He suggested that a drop-off area could be developed that would accommodate 1-2 cars, but that users be required to park at the "second" parking area that provides access to the Webster Conservation Area through the Manuel property and walk back to the launch area.

Rich also proposed that the town replace the "Private Property" and "No Trespassing" signs currently posted on town property on Lake Road with appropriate signage that would indicate that the road is for residents only and that OHRV access is prohibited.

Chief Briggs suggested that in both cases the town should schedule a site walk with the abutters to explain the town's intentions and to receive their input.

Steve Walker of OSI suggested that the CC develop a management plan for the Manuel property. Since there is no easement document for Manuel, the best course would be to follow OSI guidelines for LCIP property management and the purposes for which the property was purchased: Atlantic white cedar preservation, wildlife habitat protection and access to Country Pond.

State Nursery Plant Purchase. Evy reported that the plants for Valley Land and the Rec Center will soon be available for pickup.

Beaver pipes. Rich St. Hilaire has identified several sites where beaver pipes would be useful, including the Route 107 Town Forest and the dog park. The estimated cost for installation of a

single pipe is \$1,500 minus a \$500 grant from Friends of Wildlife, which the CC would apply for if the work were approved.

Trail Cameras. Trails will research purchasing options for trail cameras. Greg estimated a cost of \$150 per camera, including camera, lockbox, memory cards and batteries.

Possible Frye incursion. Greg walked along Bartlett Brook to the edge of the Town Forest and did not find any evidence of a bridge from the abutting properties.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm

Next meeting Thursday, May 6, 6:45pm via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Foss, Secretary*