

Strafford Conservation Commission
Minutes
December 2, 2013

Present: Liz Evans Harmony Anderson Carolyn Page Dave Perkins Scott A. Young
Randy Jacunski Kerry Omand Bruce Smith Susan Barnes

Guests: none

Opening and Introductions The meeting was opened at 7:04 pm.

Public Hearing – Conservation Funds for plowing of IRCR and Town Forest Parking Areas

No members of the public were in attendance.

MOTION: Scott moved that Conservation Funds be used to pay for the plowing of the Isinglass River Conservation Reserve and the Town Forest parking lots. Seconded by Dave. Approved.

Approval of November Minutes

Liz informed the group that the snow plowing of the IRCR and Town Forest parking lots did not need to be put out to bid according to the Selectmen since both are town properties and will be plowed by the town road agent. The last sentence under November “New Business”, therefore, can be stricken. A motion was made by Harmony and seconded by Susan to accept the November 2013 **minutes** as amended. Approved.

Old Business

Bear-Paw Monitoring reports - Harmony read the 2013 conservation easement monitoring reports from Phil Auger for the Evans Mountain, Bedford and Hanson properties. He states that there are no great issues to deal with however a few things were noted on the walks:

Evans Mountain – The Wetland Mitigation work looks great. The gate was not locked and trucks and ATV’s have used the road. Phil suggests that both sides of the lock be protected by plate steel in addition to a plate covering the top. Locks should be all weather commercial quality 5 pin stainless or brass.

Discussion: Kerry will check out the lock problem. The Commission will pay for the supplies necessary to fix the broken locks if the Swamp Stompers can supply the labor and expertise.

Hanson Tract – (This is the largest property of the IRCR.) The former infringement issues on the property by an abutter have been settled. The gate at the power line is open and no longer closes probably due to the bar not set in concrete. These gates need the same fix as Evans Mountain. There wasn’t any damage this year.

Bedford Tract – The Meadow Loop trail is being used by horses quite frequently. This trail was meant to be a hiking trail only. The Swamp Stompers need to get a bridge built for the stream crossing. Mimi Jost, easement monitor–in–training, spotted a previously unknown cemetery near the Thorne boundary line.

Discussion: Phil offered to help with the design and paperwork for the bridge. Funding can be found through the Recreation Trails Grants, but applications are due soon. Kerry will talk to Phil about this.

Phil asks that paperwork for the above properties be signed quickly because of LCHIP requirements. Liz questioned the need for a signature since the forms had no line for the property owner. Harmony will find out about this.

Town Forest – The trails person from Barnstead has not come to the town offices on Tuesday evening as invited. Harmony and Carolyn will try to locate and visit her.

We need to find out when Charlie Moreno plans to schedule the Timber Stand Improvement for this winter before a town-wide activity can be planned.

Scott asked permission to trim the bottom branches of the fruit trees near the Town Forest parking lot so that mowing can be done beneath the trees. This was approved by consensus.

Harmony will get the bill from the Kitz's for mowing the field this past summer.

Other – In reference to the Ossoff Property proposed easement presented to us in October, Kerry questioned the transaction costs which seemed high. Harmony explained that more was involved than just the survey. It was pointed out that although this is a small easement, it involves much road frontage where a number of houses could be built.

Bruce also wondered whether other land management organizations should be involved in Strafford easements. Harmony suggested that the larger ones such as the Society for the Protection of NH Forests would not be interested in our smaller easements. Other groups such as Strafford Rivers would be interested in easement possibilities. Bruce will follow up on this discussion.

New Business

Winter activity at Town Forest (see above)

Next Meeting: Monday, January 6, 2014! 7:00 pm. Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Enz Page