

Strafford Conservation Commission
Minutes
June 6, 2016

Present: Liz Evans Harmony Anderson Carolyn Page Dave Perkins Scott A. Young
Randy Jacunski Bruce Smith Susan Barnes Irving Johnson
Guests: Mimi Jost James Zeblisky Dan Kern Eric Rowe

Opening and Introductions

The meeting was opened at 7:08 pm. A motion was made by Harmony and seconded by Liz to accept the May 2016 **minutes**. Approved.

Guest Presentations

James Zeblisky, Eagle Scout, came to donate \$284.00 to the Conservation Commission. The money was left over from a spaghetti dinner fund-raiser that he held to cover expenses of his bat house project. The houses are made and installed around the pond at the town forest. Thank you, James.

Dan Kern from Bear-Paw Regional Greenways announced that they have signed a purchase and sale agreement with Bruce Montville for a conservation easement on Bennett Island in Bow Lake for the reduced price of \$200,000.00. The island is a ten-acre woodland, home to a nesting pair of bald eagles and a pair of loons. The family is reserving the right to a camping area. There are no provisions to build structures. Dan is hoping to get some grant funding, but is asking both Strafford and Northwood to support the project with \$25,000.00. This is a prime site in Strafford that the Commission has been targeting for years. Additionally, about \$75,000.00 will need to be raised. We have a June 30, 2017 deadline.

MOTION: Dave moved that we fund this project with \$25,000.00, but will go as high as \$50,000.00 if needed to secure this property. Sue seconded the motion. The motion was tabled.

Eric Rowe came to find out how the grant for Evans Mountain was progressing. He is moving ahead with his plans and continues to offer us his support.

Continuing Business

IRCR Scott is string trimming the parking lot and trail up to the forest and says we need to schedule a work day to cut bittersweet starting to climb the trees. A time after tick season was suggested.

The tree planted for Lorraine Gaire is dead and will be replaced. Scott will check for a variety of crab apple that wildlife likes to eat.

Liz says the renters of the house beyond the parking lot have complained of four wheelers going by (possibly going to the powerlines) and of hearing target practice. We need to check on this. Hunting is allowed, but not target practice.

Mimi announced that volunteers pulled 17 bags of garlic mustard from the area that was infesting the IRCR. A suggestion was made to have the horse fence moved to the edge of the property to prevent further infestation.

Evans Mountain Scott, Mimi, Charlie Moreno and Sue did a whippoorwill survey on the south side of the mountain and counted at least 16 individuals. They will do another survey to confirm breeding. They also saw moose sign and signs of ATV and dirt bikes. The gate still has not been locked by the Snowmobile Club. Scott will buy a new lock and place it.

The Blue Hills Foundation has submitted a plan for trail work. Scott brought maps showing the proposed trail for both Blue Hills and the Town. Dan asked that the map also show the natural communities that the trail skirts. Dan said that the stewardship plans for both the Town and Blue Hills

have to be approved by Bear-Paw first. The B-P Land Protection Committee meets on the third Monday of the month. We have to have them submitted by then.
We will need a work day on the south peak to cut vistas that will be kept as early successional.

Town Forest Scott reported on the mess in the parking area due to plowing before the ground had frozen. A discussion followed. He suggests mowing and string trimming area around sign, lilacs and stone wall at least 3 times a year; the upper area once. George Kitz has given us permission to cut any Norway maples growing in the cow path. He is willing to take down the mother tree in the cemetery, but needs permission from Jane Fall. A monitoring trap is set up at the base of a white ash stand. The Strafford Town Forest Sign needs to be replaced.

Scott says we need a work day to reroute the Spencer Smith trail as it goes through the muddy area near the base. A time will be set in July.

Mimi, Carolyn and Gordon Page placed the “Summit” signs for the blue trail off of the Neil Mooers trail. The signs were made by Mimi and her husband.

Other Signs about dogs being kept on leash were discussed.

Farinellas need to be contacted – see last month.

New Business none

Next Meeting: Monday, July 11 7:00 pm. Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Enz Page