

Town of Randolph

Conservation Commission Minutes of June 23, 2016

Members Present: Bruce Kirmmse (Chairman). Guy Stever, Roberta Arbree, Gary Newfield and Lauren Bradley (Selectmen's Rep)

Members Excused: Walter Graff and James Hunt

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 by Chairman Kirmmse

Lauren updated the board on her research of the board's composition. The board's by-laws are very minimal and the Town vote to establish the board did not indicate the number of members the board would have. The State statutes allow for a board consisting of 3 to 7 members. She brought the issue to the Board of Selectmen at their last meeting and the BoS voted to reduce the number of board members (currently 7) to 5 with up to 2 alternates which would allow the board to need only 3 members to constitute a quorum. She also spoke with Maria Neal whose term was up in 2016 and she indicated that she thought she was no longer a member of the board. On a motion from Gary with a second from Roberta, the board voted to reduce the board to 5 members with 1 alternate.

The board met to speak with Elise Lawson regarding completing a study of the Moose River Drainage and possibly a Natural Resources Inventory. She has already completed a Forest Management Plan and a study of the Israel River Drainage in 2012. She presented some samples of Natural Resource Inventories she has done for other towns. She offered some options which could include a study of the Moose River Drainage only but could also include the unprotected areas in Randolph Hill area. She would recommend some field work to identify the different types of wetlands. Determining size, functional value, diversity, wildlife habitat, buffers and educational value helps rank the wetlands. The study could also be used to determine Prime Wetlands, though this is not required, or help the Town create ordinances to help conserve land. The data obtained from this study can also help to create the Natural Resources Inventory. Lauren cautioned that designating an area as Prime Wetlands requires certain criteria be met, consent by the land owner, approval by the Town and finally the State. Lauren also explained that land in this designation then becomes protected and basically untouchable. She cautioned the board that residents could be opposed to that designation. Part of the criteria for that designation is that at least 51% of the area must have soil that is defined as "very poorly drained". The cost to do the study of the Moose River Drainage will be approximately \$7,000. Elise didn't believe she would need additional time in the field in order to complete the Natural Resources Inventory as she could pull the data from the Forest Management Plan as well as the Israel River and Moose River studies. The cost to complete the National Resources Inventory would be approximately an additional \$3,200 which would include mapping and report writing. Holding a public informational meeting would be approximately an additional \$200. Elise would plan to do the fieldwork during the growing season and be done with that around the end of September, complete the GIS analysis in the fall then move on to the report writing and mapping phase and present the final report in the summer of 2017. The board discussed how best to be sure the public understands why they are moving forward with this project. They decided to have an informational meeting to explain what they are planning to do. Roberta pledged to donate \$5000 to the Conservation Commission Fund to be used towards the study if other funding sources cannot be found. On a motion from Guy with a second from Gary, the board voted to do the study pending financial support and to hold an informational meeting on July 14, 2016 to inform the public of the project. Guy then made a motion to take \$1000 from the Conservation Commission Fund as a retainer for Elise which received a second from Roberta and all members voted in favor.

Old Business: Roberta presented an expense request to take \$1000 from the Conservation Fund to pay the legal expenses associated with the Clark land gift which will be refunded by the Randolph Foundation which the

members present signed. The closing on the property is scheduled for June 30, 2016. A small plaque will identify that the land was donated to the town.

Minutes of June 8, 2016: On a motion from Roberta with a second from Gary the board voted to pass over the minutes until the July 14, 2016 meeting so the board could review them.

Adjournment: The chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle M. Lutz
June 29, 2016

DRAFT