

**Thornton Conservation Commission
Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, October 11, 2022 - 3:00 p.m. at
Thornton Town Hall**

Minutes

Present: Mike Boisvert, Katri Gurney, Al Lewis, Myrtle Lewis, Jerry Sobolewski
Absent: Maryellen Sakura

Myrtle Lewis called the meeting to order at 3:15 PM.

1. Minutes. The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed electronically. Myrtle Lewis noted a couple of typographical errors that should be corrected. A motion to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting with the corrections passed unanimously, with 5 members present at the time of the vote.

2. TCC 2023 Budget. Myrtle Lewis shared the budget electronically prior to this meeting and is the same amount as 2022: \$725

3. What Can NH Conservation Commission funds be used for.

- Myrtle Lewis asked this question to Barbara Richter, Executive Director; NH Associations of Conservation Commissions. She provided the NH Municipal Conservation Fund Guidebook published by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. The guidebook states that funds can be used for expenditures towards Natural Resource Inventory; index of wetlands; print & distribute books, maps, pamphlets deemed necessary for our work.
- TCC can hire someone to assist and/or complete the town's Natural Resources Inventory. Mike Boisvert spoke with Barbara Richter about our current approach and that trying to do this ourselves is the most cost effective method however we'll probably need assistance with fine tuning it as well better maps.
- From reading the guidebook, it appears funds can be used to pay for a conceptual design to protect natural resources such as Robin's Nest. The Conservation Commission has the authority to spend conservation funds authorized by a majority of its members. Discussion ensued regarding Board of Selectmen approval and thought it best to keep them updated of our plans with spending this money.
- Barbara Richter recommend that Myrtle Lewis become familiar with the Town Warrant regarding the percentage of the current use fee applied to Conservation Fund and the yearly cap. Mike Boisvert agreed this would be good to know so we can review town records to make sure it's being applied.

4. Robin's Nest Project State Representatives Letters.

- Mike Boisvert sent letters via pdf format to Thornton's Representatives with the General Congress of New Hampshire email addresses informing them of the importance of Robin's Nest as an outdoor recreational resource and ask if they can create a Robin's Nest Park. Mike sent copies to Desiree Mahurin to forward to the Board of Selectmen to make them aware in the event they are contacted by any of our representatives. Joseph Kenney, Executive Councilor, requested additional information which Mike provided and Jeffrey Gleason, NH House State Representative, replied he would consult with his colleagues at the State House regarding what can be done.

5. TCC Shirts and Hats.

- Mike Boisvert shared the latest t-shirt design with the help of Myrtle Lewis. Members reviewed the previous t-shirt designs and chose the shirt with water waves as their favorite with Thornton Conservation Commission curved around it. Members agreed it should be synthetic. Five shirts and five hats will be ordered that should be in line with the 2022 budgeted line item. Mike Boisvert received the shirt sizes from members and will send them the final version before ordering.

6. Quarterly Photo Contest.

- Discussion ensued over the lack of interest with the Photo Contest from Thornton's Residents. Katri Gurney will check if there has been any submissions but even if there is one, it is not enough to justify continuing the program. TCC agreed it should be discontinued. It will remain publicized in the Town of Thornton's website through the remainder of this year and then be removed at year end.

7. DES Waterfront Property Owners Presentation.

- Myrtle Lewis spoke with Rosemarie Aures from the DES about providing a presentation to landowners along the Pemigewasset River about what they can do to protect the river. Rosemarie recommended getting a few more towns involved such as Campton and Woodstock to increase participation. She recommended next year and May seems to be good month since that is when some property owners return to their homes for the summer months.
- Myrtle Lewis recommends sending letters to all Pemi River landowners about attending this presentation and Katri Gurney suggested that perhaps it could be expanded to include other bodies of water such as Mad River. Having the presentation at the Thornton Town Hall may not be the most comfortable setting and discussion ensued with other options.

8. NHACC Annual Conference, November 5th.

- Mike Boisvert and Jerry Sobolewski stated they will be attending.

9. Robin's Nest Update

- Katri Gurney indicated she has not received a response from Alan Hanscom, NH Department of Transportation [DOT] to remove the requirement of Thornton having insurance from the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Jerry Sobolewski contacted another person at DOT regarding this matter who responded that Alan Hanscom is working on it. Jerry Sobolewski mentioned that TCC waits for a response and a sketch/plan from Alan Hanscom all of the time so this project continues to drag on.
- Jerry Sobolewski has requested Desiree Mahurin, Acting Town Administrator, regarding the impact of adding Robin's Nest for insurance coverage and is awaiting a response.

10. Pemi River Campground Expansion Update

- The owner, Jerry Warner, withdrew its application and will resubmit application for adding more campsites given the difficulty of meeting certain timelines. Jerry expressed interest with working with the other Pemi River outfitters using Robin's Nest to pay for a porta pottie, fixing the road and making other improvements. However none of this work can be performed unless the Board of Selectmen signs the DOT Memorandum of Understanding.

11. Other Business

- Not much progress has been made with the Natural Resources Inventory. We are hoping more time can be spent as winter approaches. Katri is working on a table comparing the town's adoption of water resources zoning laws with other towns in the State of NH.
- Myrtle Lewis has been in contact with Kathy Chamberlain who has offered to help TCC as needed. Her former position was a grant writer. Myrtle will invite Kathy to our next meeting.
- Myrtle Lewis shared that Maryellen Sakura will be resigning from the Thornton Conservation Commission for a number of reasons. Maryellen offered to help with any projects as needed. The Commission thanks Maryellen for her guidance and help over the years.

12. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:37 pm. The next Commission meeting will be on Tuesday, November 8th at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Boisvert, Thornton Conservation Committee Member