

Hopkinton Conservation Commission
September 17, 2013 Meeting
At Town Hall 1900 EDT

MINUTES

Present were: Lee Wilder, Rob Knight, Erick Leadbeater, Ron Klemarczyk, Cleve Kapala, Doug Giles, Jed Merrow and Bob LaPree.

Guest present: None

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 EDT by vice chairperson, Lee Wilder.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Corrected minutes of 08/20/13 were approved as written.
2. Letter was received from Derek Owen resigning from the HCC. Appreciation was expressed for Derek's long service to the Commission.
3. New Commission members: Doug Giles will fill the vacant seat on the Commission; Bob Lapree will become the senior alternate. It was voted to recommend that the selectmen appoint Bethann McCarthy as second alternative to the HCC. Lee is contacting Neal Cass re that procedure.
4. New officers were elected: Lee Wilder, Chair; Ron Klemarczyk, Vice Chair and Rob Knight, Secretary. Jed Merrow was voted to remain Treasurer.
5. Update from the Trails subcommittee: The Hopkinton Village Greenway trail is complete, including blazes and trail signs. If anyone sees any problems they should let Rob know so he can address them. HCC members Bob, Lee, Cleve, Ron, and Rob will be attending the opening ceremony on 9/21. Ron will represent the Commission.
6. Trail Ordinance: A part of the trail on Hawthorne Forest was damaged by horses. Agreed most town trails are not suitable for horses with the exception of the railroad bed and Mastyard. Ron will draft a trail ordinance, and because of the urgency, circulate it by email to the members for approval, and then submit it to the selectmen to be adopted.

Jed Merrow arrived at 7:45.

7. Treasurer's report. Spreadsheet dated 09/13/13 approved as presented. The HCC needs to present a budget for next year at the October 14 selectmen's meeting. Jed will send around a draft budget by email and attend the selectmen's budget meeting.
8. Review of the Culvert Data and Report. Cleve and Lee have given feedback on the report, and Ron also has comments. Other Commission members will also review the report, and based on feedback, Jed will bring a final version of the report to the Commission's October meeting.
9. Ron will wait for the report to be finalized before speaking with Ron Thayer, road agent, re possible "problem culverts".
10. Hopkinton Conservation Boundary Markers on Town Conservation Lots: Rob has been busy with the Greenway trail, but has put up boundary markers wherever the trail goes onto Town conservation land.
11. Update on the Hopkinton Conservation Land website developed by Doug Giles working with the Open Space Committee. Doug reported that the site is up and live. All who have seen the site agreed it looks great. Cost was \$500 for Kathy Barnes to set it up. Neal Cass agreed that the site could be hosted separately from the Town's website, for convenience of the HCC maintaining the site. Cost for that separate hosting is currently \$80 per year. Doug will be the Commission's interface with the website. The town office should also have the site password and backup access. The site should have comments or questions addressed to "Contact Us" and be routed through the town office.
12. Priorities for land protection: The Open Space Committee has developed a list of priorities for land acquisition or protection. Agreed that all requests for land protection

- should go to the Open Space Committee first, and as a policy the HCC will only consider properties recommended by the Open Space Committee.
13. Progress report re spraying of invasive species with funds from Merrimack County Conservation District (MCCD): Erick reported on conversations with Stacey Luke of the Merrimack County Conservation District. Since Rollins was brush cut there has not been enough regrowth to warrant spraying this fall. However Vegetation Control Service, Inc. (VCS) will spray at Ransmeier in accordance with the plan and their bid. In the spring Stacey will apply for permits to do invasive control in the wetland at Ransmeier and Hawthorne. Erick will coordinate VCS's schedule. Agreed that Ron will ask Prescott Towle to stop his invasive spraying at Hawthorne and we will use Vegetation Control Service as part of a broader invasive control program. Approved payment of the bill from Prescott Towle for his follow up spraying of the Japanese Knotweed at Hawthorne forest.
 14. HCC summer 2013 Conservation Camper, Jacob Killam, will attend the next meeting. Erick is arranging this.
 15. Items over the lot line at the Hawthorne Lot: Neal Cass reported the status is unclear. Rob will put up conservation land signs along the boundary and check on the status.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Commission will continue to have its meetings begin at 7 PM. Town Hall is new location. Lee will schedule with Neal.
2. Ron reported there is more erosion at Rollins lot. Approved that Ron will arrange for a load of riprap to be delivered.
3. Jed reported that the Extension Service could arrange to do wildlife habitat identification and mapping for the town. Amanda Stone would meet with the HCC and the Open Space Committee to explain the project and get feedback on our priorities. The maps would help with prioritizing land protection in the town. Agreed that Amanda Stone's presentation would be at a separate meeting time and place. Jed will investigate whether there would be any financial cost and what the time commitments for the Commission members would be beyond the 1 ½ hour initial meeting.
4. Cleve will investigate who would need to be approached to extend the sidewalk along Main Street from its present terminus to the place where the Greenway Trail connects with Hawthorne Forest. It would make the Greenway safer.
5. Lee would like to formalize the Trail Committee as a subcommittee under the Conservation Commission. Questions whether the Trails subcommittee had already been established by Commission vote. [Cleve reported by email 9/18 that in the meeting minutes from December 12, 2012, an "...informal Trails Subcommittee..." was established with Rob and Cleve identified as members from the subcommittee.] The Commission voted to establish a formal trails subcommittee as per the previous minutes. Membership will be composed of the present members of the trails subcommittee. The subcommittee should report to the HCC at its monthly meeting, keep the HCC "in-the loop" via E-mail cc's, and if urgent action is required the subcommittee can poll the HCC members by email.
6. Derek Owen will represent the Commission on the Town's Kimball Cabins committee.
7. Bob reported on the plan to name an intermittent brook at Ransmeier "Derek's Brook" after Derek Owen, and erect a sign at the bridge. This naming is in the HCC's appreciation of Derek's dedicated service to the HCC over many years. It was pointed out that this plan and expense are something that would appropriately have been approved by the HCC in advance.
8. Commission approved expenses incurred by Bob Lapree: anchoring ramp at Bohanan \$50.78; Derek signs \$43.72.

9. Commission approved expenses incurred by Lee Wilder: Voss signs for Greenway signs \$226.50.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 EDT.

The next HCC Meeting is scheduled for October 15 at 1900 EDT at Town Hall. Rob is host.