

Hopkinton Conservation Commission
March 19th, 2024 Public Hearing & Special Meeting
Held at the Hopkinton Town Hall

Present: James Newsom, Ron Klemarczyk, Jonathan Bradstreet, Bonnie Christie, Melissa Jones
Alternates: Molly Hardenbergh, Katherine Mitchell,
Absent: Bob LaPree, Stephanie Kratsios, Rob Knight

03/19/24 Minutes – Approved 4/16/24

FIVE RIVERS CONSERVATION TRUST PRESENTATION

Liz Short (Executive Director) and Jeff Evans (Director of Conservation) presented.

Liz described Five Rivers' vision/mission statement. Five Rivers serves the capital region (17 communities). Hopkinton has the largest number of acres preserved at 1,099 in 11 conserved properties.

Currently they are working to conserve the Dustin Property, which is 36 acres abutting two other conserved properties.

“Building Community Connections to Conserved Land” is a signage project currently in the works, starting with certain “priority” properties, including the Bohanan Farm, Ransmeier Woods and the Sweatt Preserve in Hopkinton. Liz showed examples of the new signs, which will include their new logo and will be 12”x18”. They propose standalone signs. Ron suggested that lots of signs are distracting and Molly suggested putting the signs further along the trails rather than on or next to the trailhead kiosks. Liz asked about permission to post the signs, and was told the Conservation Commission doesn't have signage authority. Bonnie mentioned that there is a sign ordinance in Hopkinton. The group discussed that signage was most likely to be determined by landowners and the easements.

Jeff oversees transactions and stewardships. He described three categories used to help identify potential projects: Natural Resources & Resilience, Working Landscapes and Access & Inclusion. He described how various data sets were analyzed and integrated to map these values. He showed how their regional conservation plan is represented in Hopkinton. The data will help Five Rivers be more proactive in finding land to protect and also help them answer inquiries that come to them.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Melissa reported that we currently have approximately \$194,000 in the Conservation account and \$27,000 in the Town Forest account. There were no recent LUCT deposits.

Melissa made a motion to approve \$350 to pay dues to the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. Jonathan seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

James made a motion to approve payment of \$209 to Bonnie Christie for printing hard copies of the NRI. Jonathan seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved (Bonnie abstained).

OTHER BUSINESS

Karen Robertson asked about getting new big maps for the Town Hall. Molly thinks that Staples can print enlargements.

Since the Commission would merely grab the map files from the website, James is going to suggest to Karen that she do the same, and thus the Town would pay the cost of the enlargements.

Karen has been referencing the NRI frequently.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

James and Melissa's terms are up and both will be going off the board. James thinks the Select board makes selections in May. Meanwhile, he suggested that Commission members recruit two new members. He handed the keys to the Town Hall to Ron, who is the Vice Chair and will temporarily fill in. Melissa offered to stay on until a new Treasurer is chosen.

Meeting went into Non-Public session at 8:05.