

Hopkinton Conservation Commission

February 16, 2021 Meeting

Held via ZOOM per the Governor's Emergency Order #12/Executive Order 2020-04

2/16/21 Minutes – Approved 4/27/21

Roll call taken. Present: James Newsom, Ron Klemarczyk, Rob Knight, Melissa Jones, Bob Lapree, Jonathan Bradstreet, Bonnie Christie, Molly Hardenbergh (Alt), Juliana Dapice (Alt), Stephanie Kratsios (Alt)

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by James Newsom and James read a statement regarding the Governor's Emergency Order #12/Executive Order 2020-04 and how the meeting would be conducted online.

1. HCC minutes for 1/08/21 and 1/19/21 meetings were accepted.
2. HCC mail: The mail was circulated by email.
3. Treasurer's report: The January figures were not received from the town treasurer.
4. Chesley purchase: Rob Knight gave a financial summary. The HCC cost was approximately \$59,500 including \$2,500 for Five Rivers. The Drinking Water grant was \$63,500. James Newsom moved to authorize Melissa Jones to pay the \$2,500 invoice from Five Rivers for their work in getting the grant and transferring it to the town. Ron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously (Rob Knight abstained).
5. Tyler Landing boat launch publicity: The Public Water Access Advisory Board wants to add the launch site to their statewide map. After discussion, it was agreed that it is premature to publicize the new boat launch and people should be using the Bohanan Farm launch for now. The HCC needs to develop a site plan for Tyler Landing, including parking, boat launch and trail. Agreed to do a site visit once snow cover is gone.
6. Indemnification by farmers: At the Chesley hearing the Select Board said people farming town property should sign an indemnification and have liability insurance. Rob Knight will ask Neal Cass exactly what is required for the farmers at Tyler Landing and Ransmeier.
7. Walls subdivision and access to Gould Lot Town Forest: The Gould Lot Town Forest has been accessed across a corner of the Walls property in the past for timber harvests. Ron Klemarczyk reported that the Walls property is being sold to a developer. Jerry Walls will ask the developer to give the town access, although we may have to pay for it. There are other, less desirable ways to access the lot, but Ron would like to secure good, permanent access for future timber harvests.
8. Mowing the Rollins lot for view and habitat management: Tabled for later discussion.
9. Brockway - abutter's request for a tree to be removed: Neal Cass and the Highway Department are working on it.
10. Trails update - James Newsom:
 - An abutter to Bohanan Farm East wants to make a private connection to the HCC trails. The abutter needs to contact Bohanan Farm for permission since the farm owns the property.
 - A neighbor at Brockway, John Hart, wants to do trail maintenance at Brockway and Cleve Kapala will work with him. Cleve will clear the work with NH Audubon.
11. Shoreline protection act education effort update: Bonnie Christie and Melissa Jones have started drafting a flier on the basics of the riverfront protection act.

12. NRI and Master Plan update: Bonnie Christie reported that the updated Chapter IX “Conservation, Preservation and Open Space” submitted to the Planning Board in 2015 by the HCC has been incorporated in the written Master Plan but not the online version. Some of the information in Chapter IX would be helpful for an updated Natural Resource Inventory.
Discussed who could do an NRI for the town. Bonnie mentioned that many towns have used Moosewood Ecological Services. Ron Klemarczyk was not pleased with the job they did for Concord. Stephanie Kratsios said the NH Association of Natural Resource Scientists is another resource. UNH Extension Service had a presentation on NRI’s and Stephanie will circulate the Power Point from the program.
Discussed whether the HCC wants to pursue doing an NRI. Agreed it would be a good resource. It is important to establish a baseline to track climate change and invasives. It would be a lot of work and expensive, but grants might cover some of the cost. It would be an ongoing, living document, and might be an opportunity to work with a college program. NRI’s are normally updated every ten years. Agreed doing an NRI is desirable, but the HCC does not know the cost or parameters. The HCC needs to continue to investigate. Bonnie will circulate links to other towns’ NRI’s so we can get an idea of what an NRI might look like.
13. Climate change outreach: Stephanie Kratsios said rising floodwaters are expected and must be dealt with by mitigation and adaptation. Preserving prime wetlands and keeping shorelines natural are good adaptations. An NRI would identify lands that are critical. Discussed having the HCC designate prime wetlands. Most towns have not done this since it can become very contentious.
14. HCC/OSC relationship: Discussed the difference between the two groups. The OSC oversees use of the open space bond and concentrates on land acquisition. The OSC screens acquisitions for the HCC. Melissa Jones circulated the 1/21/20 HCC minutes where the HCC and OSC had a joint meeting to discuss their working relationship.

Ron Klemarczyk made a motion, seconded by Melissa Jones to adjourn to non-public meeting per RSA 91 A:3 II (d) Acquisition of real estate. Vote unanimous in favor. The Committee adjourned to non-public session at 8:28 PM. The Committee returned from non-public session at 8:53 PM. Ron Klemarczyk made a motion, seconded by Melissa Jones to seal the minutes until the project is able to go public or removed from consideration. Vote unanimous in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Minutes submitted by Rob Knight, Secretary.

Next HCC meeting is scheduled for 7:00 on March 16, 2021.