

These minutes are draft until approved

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___Approved with changes.

Effingham Conservation Commission Meeting minutes, September 9, 2013

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. There were no guests or members of the public.
2. Organizational Issues
 - The minutes of the August 5 meeting were approved.
 - Jack presented his first financial report to critical acclaim. After touring the provinces to iron out the kinks it will be going to Broadway.
 - Communications, interactions with organizations and other town boards: Planning Board interaction covered under Other Business
3. Water Issues:
 - Inspection tour of Pine River: Al reported that one logjam visible from the Elm Street bridge seemed to have shifted to the bank. He could not say whether it was the result of temporary high water or human activity. Members discussed how and when to walk the river bank to assess the situation downstream. The ultimate goal would be to clear the channel to facilitate passage by appropriate watercraft, e.g. canoes and kayaks. An ECC representative would have to determine how riverfront property owners would feel about both the inspection walk and any clearance activities. ECC would also have to determine whether any state regulations forbid removal of downed trees and other natural debris from the waterway. Preliminary inquiries have indicated that DES does not object as long as the bank of the river is not damaged or altered, but not all ECC members are satisfied that the information provides a complete guarantee that channel clearance would not incur some sort of penalty. Investigation continues.
 - PLA Watershed study: Emelyn reported on the septic system survey conducted by the Province Lake Association as part of their overall watershed study. PLA representatives visited Jolly Roger Campground and two others in Wakefield to interview occupants there who may not have received the mailed questionnaire. She reported that human waste and gray water are handled in a variety of ways, not all of them up to best management practices. The PLA continues outreach and education efforts.
4. Open Space Issues:
 - LLP – Jack added a “Carry In, Carry Out” sign to the LLP. So far no one has called to order carry out, probably because no menu was included.
 - Watts Preserve walkway – Project on hold until water level goes down.
 - Green Mountain Picnic Table – An ECC expedition to the summit discovered not one but two picnic tables up there. Neither one was from ECC. Investigation revealed that Eagle Scouts had asked to build and place tables as one of their projects. Their inquiry had overlapped with ECC’s offer and the state had not wanted to give up either one in case one of them failed to materialize. Then the scouts made a dash to the peak and assembled their tables on site before ECC’s could be placed there. ECC’s table remains with the county forester awaiting the commission’s decision whether to put it on the mountain or somewhere else. Discussion concerned whether to put it at the summit with the other two, place it at a lower elevation or put it near the Route 153 boat ramp on an ECC lot or the boat ramp property

itself. Members finally decided to place it at the boat ramp, where the commission had hoped previously to provide that amenity, rather than crowd the summit of Green Mountain or sit in relative obscurity along one of the three trails up the mountain. A representative of ECC will contact Fish and Game to see what needs to be done to put it in a convenient location for boat ramp users.

5. Education and Outreach:

- ECC brochure: Members discussed purpose and content for an informative brochure to place around town.
- ECC website: Jack and Al will contact Theresa Swanick. Al planned to go to the selectmen's meeting on September 10.

6. Other Business and Special Reports:

- ECC Roster – Members updated their contact information.
- 2014 Budget – Members conducted a lengthy and exhaustive discussion of each budget line item for presentation to the budget committee.
- Milfoil – Emelyn reported on her investigation of benthic barriers as a control method for the area of Ossipee River adjacent to the Route 153 boat launch. She will consult with Cliff Cabral of New England Milfoil to see if he is qualified to install the barriers. River current could be an issue, but it would be with any method except hand harvesting. A barrier might be secured sufficiently to work in the relatively slow current of that stretch of river. Meanwhile, members and associated will try to make inspection trips on the river to determine further extent of infestations.
- Planning Board – Master Plan: Emelyn and Jack attended the Planning Board meeting at which revisions to the natural resources chapter of the master plan were discussed. The chapter will be published as the planning board has amended it. Period. So that's good...yeah.

The next work session will be held Monday, September 23 at the municipal offices, School Street, at 6:30 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held Monday, October 7, at the municipal offices, School Street, at 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Emelyn Albert (*Chair*); Al Levesque; Harry Libby; Tim White (*Recording Secretary*); Jack Williams (*Vice Chair/Treasurer*); Virginia Wrabel. Absent: Steph Barnes (*alt.*); Steve Zalewski (*alt.*)

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Recording Secretary

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