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___ Approved with changes.

Effingham Conservation Commission Meeting minutes, June 7, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:43 p.m.

Members enjoyed a detailed and interesting presentation on geocaching by Johanna Vienneau, a former Effingham resident now living in Freedom. She explained the origin and evolution of the activity and provided examples of the containers used, and objects placed therein, showing how they have changed over time. She also provided an overview of how information is shared and what equipment a participant needs. Geocaching began in the 1990s as GPS units were made more accurate by open access to more precise locating data from the satellites that had already been in use for government and military applications. Now most smart phones have location features that make a dedicated GPS unit unnecessary. She reported on existing caches in Effingham and the surrounding area. One in the PRCP can be reached from the existing trail. The one in the LLP is farther into the interior, near the river. They're all over the place. Check it out.

Organizational Issues:

- The minutes of the May 3, 2021 meeting were approved.
- Financial Report: \$5,455.00 remains of the 2021 budget allotment. The Conservation Fund contains \$13,500.00. The Invasive Plant Fund has \$15,400.00, including money added as a result of the 2021 Town Meeting.

Water Issues:

- Elm Street Bridge: Chuck Fuller asked ECC to check the bridge site for leftover construction debris after someone sent pictures identified as uncollected debris from last year's major repair project. Kamal and Emelyn visited the site and found nothing. Tim, who tests the river there on a regular basis for GMCG, also looked and found that a few small chunks of concrete still remained in the water, well concealed by the river's ubiquitous silt. In general, though, the cleanup was remarkably thorough. An untrained observer might misidentify the drain coming out of the expansion joint as an improperly finished piece, but Steve Jarecki identified it from the description as a normal installation.
- Beaver Deceivers: Audrey Frazier communicated Diane Jarecki with regarding possible options to reduce the need to trap beavers at culvert stream crossing on town roads. Members discussed the Beaver Deceiver device in the materials Audrey sent. Consensus was that beaver control falls outside of a conservation commission's mandated scope as delineated in the RSAs.
- Snow Road Bridge: Lawrence Edwards contacted Emelyn on June 6 to ask if ECC could corroborate that proper procedures were not followed when the old culverts were removed to make way for the replacement bridge over the South River. When Emelyn met with him he had plans for a previous design, not the one currently under construction. Jack consulted Mike Cahalane, who told him that the Edwards plans were bid plans, not design plans for what is actually being built. Silt fencing does not prevent

turbidity issues in the river itself, and that the current project plan was approved without a retention pond. Turbidity fencing was approved by DES as sufficient, and was removed after it was no longer needed. Members also agreed that this was beyond ECC's mandate as well. Still, it's nice to see that people think the conservation commission can be useful.

- Useful, but not needed: Kamal reported that Mike Cahalane did not require ECC's assistance on the next phase of the town-wide culvert upgrading project proceeding methodically after Kamal provided the exact location of three culverts from the list he had furnished earlier, from the culvert study he had spearheaded while at the helm of ECC.

Land Issues:

- Kamal and Emelyn met with Andrew Lester of Bella Terra Trail Design on May 19 to walk the two proposed trail routes Andrew had laid out in the PRCP, creating a connected network with the existing trail. The total bid also included installing non-skid strips on the wooden bridges on the trail that Bella Terra previously built. Members discussed the proposal and voted to approve the expenditure of \$5,540.00. Kamal made the motion, seconded by Diane. It passed unanimously. Work is scheduled to begin in July.
- Jack asked the BOS to provide gravel for the parking area at the Larry Leavitt Preserve on Route 153. He reported that the request had been approved.

Education and Outreach:

- Prizes selected by Emelyn were awarded to the grade winners at EES on May 4 for the Earth Day poster contest. The winning posters can be viewed on the ECC page of the town website. Another fine job by Em!

Other Business and Special Reports:

- Audrey Frazier asked for a list of scenic roads in Effingham, at the request of the New Hampshire Electric Coop. Research indicates that a section of Route 153 might be designated as scenic under the controlling RSAs (231.157 and 231.158), but that no other roads are so designated in town. Approval process is specific, and apparently unpopular.

The next regular meeting will be held Monday, July 5, at the municipal offices, School Street, at 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Emelyn Albert (*Chair*); Diane Jarecki; Harry Libby; Kamal Nath; Tim White (*Recording Secretary*); Jack Williams (*Vice Chair/Treasurer*) Alternates: Steve Jarecki(*alt.*).
Absent: Virginia Wrabel(*alt.*); Bill Wrabel (*alt.*)

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Recording Secretary

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