Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: Jan 23, 2018, 8 am.

Members present: Kim Cowles, Chris Nicodemus, Ginny Jeffryes, Mary Grote, Mark Ober.

Guests: Peter Grote

Minutes reviewed of 11/21/2017. Chris moves to approve minutes. Mary seconds. Unanimously approved.

Minutes of 12/19/2017 reviewed. No changes suggested by the 3 members who had been present. No quorum at that meeting, so unable to vote on approval motion.

Brief review of the UNH Cooperative Extension info of last meeting, and Ginny distributed their info packets to FCC members who weren’t there. Discussion about contacting Emma to post Fox Hill Park trails on Trailfinder website. Ginny will look for Emma’s contact info. Discussion about adding local wildlife to our natural resources inventory, perhaps via a community wildlife pin map posted at Town Hall or the library, similar to what Easton did. Coded color dots, not pins. Will consider doing this in summer.

Profile Trails update: (Chris). Continues to meet about that. Hasn’t heard for sure whether Jill’s Trail was awarded the grant money. The town portion: Kim says all landowners gave permission except Garnet Hill is still working through the process, waiting for easement. Trail to Bethlehem – Chris went out with John Morton who had some good ideas, some of which are more expensive however.

Fox Hill Park update: (Kim). They got $500 grant to do updated kiosk. Will do this spring – updated map, history of park, new roof. Untimely death on the trail so Kim periodically cleans up as snow belts.

McKenzie Woods easement: (Kim) Sign company gave her a good quote for the conservation placards but they were busy, so she’s waiting till spring to order the easement signs, once a local artist has updated the logo – being worked on now. Less than $500. Will come out of 2018 budget.

Board members terms expiring: Mary and Chris agree to continue for another 3 year term. They will contact Carol about the procedure to do this with the Select Board.

Website: Kim asking us to review website to see if any suggestions for updating it.

NH HB 1343: Stoddard Conservation Commission reached out to other towns’ CCs. The HB will amend existing 1939 RSA about Beaver trapping reporting to add dam intervention reporting and strengthen out of season beaver taking reporting. The background info in the letter from Stoddard reviewed. It states that private land out of season trapping and/or dam removal has been assumed by F&G to be always done to protect property, even though this isn’t always the case. The ecologic importance of beavers with their dams is significant: creating habitat succession from water bodies to marshes to shrubby fields and eventually creating new young forests, all of which feed many wildlife species; alleviating local droughts, and alleviating major downstream flooding; creating wetlands which purify water. Discussion re the bill – creates very little administrative burden for F&G, but would allow more data re beavers, as well as help prevent dam removal which isn’t actually needed for property protection. Stoddard CC had asked in December if we wanted to sign their letter but the initial hearing in F&G & Marine Resources Committee is 1/30, so likely they’ve already sent it in. We didn’t have a quorum at our December meeting to address this then. Instead, we could write our own email supporting the bill to the Committee. Ginny’s motion is: Ginny will draft a brief letter to the Fish and Game and Marine Resources Committee stating we support HB 1343’s proposed changes to reporting requirements and tracking of beavers taken and beaver dam removal or beaver pipe installation. Ginny will email FCC to be reviewed prior to sending it. Chris seconds. Unanimously approved.

Next meeting: Feb 20th 8 am.

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes.