

**Minutes, Atkinson Conservation Commission
September 6, 2005
Atkinson Town Hall**

Call To Order by Chairman Tim Dziechowski at 7:30

Attending:

Tim Dziechowski
Scott Kukshtel
Pete McVay
Michelle Veasey
Paul Wainwright

Guest Business and Plan Reviews:

Dan Kimball, visitor

Steve Lewis, Jane Jones lot: Steve Lewis came to present a plan for the Conservation Commission to gain conservation land from part of the Jane Jones lot. There are some technical issues because the lot was never legally incorporated as part of Settlers Ridge. Since it was subdivided at one time, and has been surveyed, the Planning Board should be able to approve a subdivision so that the land can be transferred. Steve gives up approximately eight units of buildable land by this transfer. Since this land does not belong to the Settlers Ridge association and is completely separate, there are no other legal issues. Tim and Steve will work to get the necessary paperwork and costs for the transfer to be approved.

Internal Business

Secretary report: Minutes for August 2005 were approved as amended, with four ayes and one abstention.

Treasurer's report: The credit for \$62.99 out of the equipment budget still has not been credited. The town also has not reported the money from the Moose Grant into Conservation funds. There is a question about what was approved and whether or not it is in the selectmen minutes. Michelle will check the selectmen minutes for the approval. Our membership in SPNHF was renewed.

Town Mowing: Tim recused himself and Paul assumed chairman duties for discussing of the summer mowing bill of \$900. Pete had reviewed the mowed areas. It was moved and seconded to pay the bill. The motion passed with one abstention.

Appraisal Cost Project: Tim received a letter from the Stanhope Group (Pete Knight) that gave an estimate of \$300 to \$400 to appraise any lot in preparation for possible conservation use. A subsequent letter from the Stanhope group estimated \$1,000 to appraise the Jane Jones lot and the Marilyn Matte lot. Tim contacted the Stanhope group and got a revised estimate of \$800 to do both lots.

There was a short discussion of how to handle small appropriations (office supplies, routine expenses, etc.) without having to discuss and vote on each one. Pete noted that expenses and proposed expenses can be included in the Treasurer's Report and approved as a body, if there are no objections. Scott noted that known upcoming expenses can be presented and approved before they occur. Tim will find out what other departments do at the weekly Department Head meeting.

Disbursing funds from Conservation Lands fund: There is some question about who holds and controls conservation land funds: the commission or the town. The RSAs state that the funds must be held by the treasurer under separate accounting, but control of the funds is under the conservation commission. The Selectmen must approve all fund use for land purchase. Paul noted that the Selectmen approved the use of conservation land funds for the wetlands study, and that this sets a precedent and standard for fund management. That is, the commission may retain management of the funds, but it is proper to inform the selectmen and request their approval for any fund expenditures.

New Member Recruitment: Dan Kimball, visitor, was welcomed. Dan presented his background in natural resource management and was present to observe the commission and learn details. There was also some discussion of the number of members of the commission, and residency requirements. Members are required to live in the community, according to RSA regulations. There are five regular (voting) members of the board, but an unlimited number of alternates, who may vote if a regular member is absent.

Other Dredge and Fills / Site Walks / Complaints

Gilles Gagnon - Industrial Way, Lot 16-50: [Continued from August 2005] the new plans reduce the building area to make it more than 100 feet from the wetlands area, eliminating the need for a waiver or approval.

Brooks Properties - Route 111 - Lot 21-4: Tim sent a letter of complaint to the state about wetlands violation. There has been no response or case number assigned by the state yet.

Glen Saboe by Brushwood Estates wants to build a bridge over brook to reach back part of his land. No one was sure what permits (if any) are needed for such an operation. Tim reviewed the requirements, and any bridge that is outside the stream bank does not need a permit. The proposed bridge is such a structure, so no permit or waiver is needed.

Stickney Road Canoe Launch - ramp repair. The float is present, but stuck under the launch ramp. There is still a mobile home and an unlicensed car on the parking lot. Repairs to the ramp are still under investigation. Pete and Michelle will see if they can find out who owns the trailer through separate investigations.

McPherson lot - unauthorized horse trails complaint: Site inspection will wait until leaves are down.

Chambers expedited road request: no action.

Special Projects

Trailblazing standards: Michelle has investigated the Appalachian Trail standards. Michelle has purchased special blaze paint for the first blaze update in Sawmill Swamp. It was moved and seconded to approve the purchase of \$39 plus shipping. Passed unanimously. Tim will go with the scouts to map out and do the blazes on the Sawmill Swamp.

Scout Trail Projects: Sawmill Swamp: No further access to the swamp through private lands is pending. Tim proposed letting the scouts search for new trails to avoid private lands.

Town Lands & Trails Brochure Project: an outstanding bill came from RPC, but was an error. Funds are being released from the Moose Plate grant next week.

2006 Grants: nothing to report. There are possibilities of working with other towns (Hampstead, Plaistow) on joint grant projects, and the informal group to promote trails in Atkinson. LCHIP may also have grant awards coming up.

Conservation Web Site Status: Pete added the trail map, but it needs to adjust for the frame mode of the web site. Scott will also look at updating the site information.

Conservation Land Deed / Designation Issues: Tim has reviewed many town land deeds, and many deeds have wording that make it unclear whether the lands are under control of the town or conservation. These deeds will be discussed at the workshop meeting on Monday, September 19th. Also present at the workshop will be Charlie Morino, to discuss town forest management. The following items are deferred to the workshop meeting, and a formal agenda will be issued later. This workshop is open to the public. Minutes will be kept, but no conservation business will be transacted.

- Forester - town firewood project
- Open Space Zoning Amendment
- Wetlands Ordinance
- Scenic Road warrant article
- Parking lot buffer warrant article
- Rules for conservation lands / town forests

Planning Board Agenda Items:

Planning Board: the only action of note was the proposal for an eminent domain ordinance.

Zoning Board:

Chris Mastriano - 5 Twin Oaks Drive, Lot 6-71: proposal was rejected and Chris is reworking it.

Atkins/Bishop - 83 East Road Lot 19-10, Addition approved

Septic system replacement - Stickney Road, is still under discussion.

Other Business

Mowing Schedule: one more is planned for mid-October

Trailhead parking safety issues: several abutters have complained about the inadequate and dangerous parking area around the Crown Hill trailhead. The matter was taken under advisement and improvements will be discussed.

Commission went into private session under RSA 91-A3d to discuss land and possible gift lands. It was moved and seconded to go into private session, Passed unanimously.

Private session was closed at 10:30 by motion that passed unanimously. The Chairman noted that no business was transacted in the private session.

Motion made to reimburse the Betourneys for half the cost of giving lot 14/2-1 to the town as conservation land, not to exceed \$7,500, with funds coming from the Conservation Fund. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Motion made to authorize the disbursement of \$800 from the Conservation Fund to pay for appraisals of Jane Jones lot (17/13-1), and Marilyn Matte (18/85). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Motion made to empower the chairman to conduct negotiations on the Matte land for the Commission, based on the results of the appraisal. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Scott pointed out that we need more handbooks for the Conservation Commission. We only ordered four. More will be ordered.

The next meeting of the Commission will be Monday, October 3, at 7:30.

Because of the need for more discussion and review of matters coming before the Commission, an extra workshop meeting, also open to the public, was scheduled for Monday, September 19th, at 7:30.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete McVay