



Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – March 28, 2017

Hinesburg Town Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room – 7:00 PM

-Draft -

1. Call to Order 7:10 PM
2. In attendance: Merrily Lovell, Bob Hyams, Kyle Bostwick, Frank Twarog, Meg Handler, Bill Marks, Shannon Kelly, Alison Lesure, Stacey Riley, Marie Ayer, Eliot Cluba, Michele McGee, Alison Lesure, Rec. Committee members
3. Geprags Compensation Money Discussion with Rec Committee 7:15 PM
 - a. Discussion with Rec Committee members about different visions: Frank said that the Rec committee made a priority list based on Rec Committee goals. Rec Fields, Lake Iroquois, Skating Rink etc. These were thoughts but not necessarily putting a dollar amount to any of it. The Conservation Commission proposes to use the Vt. Gas money to build a fund for the future. Frank said he appreciates that approach. The Rec Dept. is just making a suggestion, and the Select Board will ultimately decide. Rec Dept said that the ball fields have in the past been happening through public donations. And the fields have become an important project for the rec committee. They have put a lot of energy into it. What is the long-term plan for the fields in terms of maintenance? Frank answered: long-term goal is fundraising, user fees, advertising etc. will pay for the maintenance. Also, grants from various athletic organizations. Hinesburg has a strong position to get those grants. The goal is to not to put the burden on taxpayers, unless absolutely necessary. Rec dept. actually brings in money to the Town (e.g. Driver's Ed.) Bill says that the Rec dept has a project ready to go. And it is tempting to spend money on that. But The CC wants to set money aside so that it is available when the need arises. For land acquisition and natural spaces. Both ideas reflect valuable goals. We should work together to find a suitable solution to make it easier for the Select Board to decide. Bob thinks context matters: CC does not see this money as a windfall. The park is degraded by the pipeline. Hopefully the degradation will be minimal. But we don't know what will happen in the future. So far, the drill is going well. But there are open questions. The CC would like broader support for conservation projects from the Rec dept. Some kind of compromise might be reached. We should work together toward reciprocal support for our various projects. We need a more collaborative process that recognizes the efforts of everyone. The community needs to come out for more broad based discussions. The conversation happening here will be communicated back to the

Rec. Dept. And similar conversations will happen with other committees, like the Trails Committee and the Energy Committee. The Select Board should aim for a unanimous decision and that will help build consensus. Everyone wants what is best for the Town.

4. Quorum Issue: 8:20 PM

Merrily proposes that we write a letter to the Select Board requesting to reduce the number of people on the CC from 9 to 5. Bill says that the CC already has the authority to designate the numbers of members. The issue is the question of what constitutes a quorum. Perhaps we should use 7 instead. That is aspirational. Bob makes a motion that the CC reconfigures to a 5 member commission and we will confirm that with the Select Board. Meg seconded the motion. Discussion. We voted. The CC wants to reduce the number to 5. Meg will write a statement to the Select Board. Bob makes a motion to change the bylaws to “rules of procedure.” The CC statute is the only one that sets a flexible number of members.

5. Erok Gillard - Service Project in Geprags. 8:45 PM

Update from Bob – he just needs Bob’s name and the intention to get things done.

6. Mail - Merrily has not picked it up.

7. Water Matters Event (March 30) 9:50PM

8. Grants – Bob says that there are a lot of grants available for small projects. We should think about small projects we might want to do. Maybe we can integrate with the school. Partner with a teacher or with the parent association. Bringing money to them might create good community spirit. The afterschool program might also be a good way to partner with children.

9. Next meeting time **Thursday -- April 13, 2017** 9:20

NOTE DIFFERENT DAY DUE TO MEMBERS NOT ABLE TO ATTEND SECOND TUESDAY.

Nature Notes 9:30 PM

10. Adjourn 9:40 PM