



Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

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Hinesburg Conservation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, November 10, 2020 - 7:00 PM

MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY

Due to closure of Hinesburg Town Hall

1. Call to order (7:00PM)
Present: Kate Kelly, Robert Hyams, Darcie Mumley, Alex Weinhagen, Merrily Lovell. Marie Ayer and Mike Bissonette were unable to attend.
2. Additions/Deletions to agenda -- None
3. Public Comment for non-agenda items -- None
4. Budget discussion with Select Board member Merrily Lovell – Selectboard is curious to know why Lewis Creek money has been taken out of the CC budget. CC explained the background discussion regarding both Lewis Creek and Lake Iroquois associations. Merrily argues that natural resources organizations should not fall under social services umbrella. Discussion about how to handle contributions to these organizations. These organizations do not come directly to the CC to make their requests. Merrily advocated for the Lewis Creek Association and Tree Planting to remain in the CC budget. She also thought that the Lake Iroquois Association contribution has become controversial and should be handled separately. The Selectboard believes that Lewis Creek and Tree Planting both belong in the CC budget. The CC made the point that while members might support the work of the various organizations, it might be more appropriate to move non-profit budget items so that the Town can view all non-profit organizations and agencies together. Perhaps they should be evaluated relative to one another. Two potential strategies: 1. Remove all organizations from the Budget; 2. Keep items within the CC budget, but reallocate total amounts so that budget amounts reflect the current priorities of the CC. Merrily will report to the Selectboard that the CC budget is still under discussion, will bring to the Select Board some options, and get back to the CC. This topic will be discussed again at the next meeting.
5. Patrick Brook river corridor project: update & discussion/approval of plan -- CC would like an independent consultant, hired by the Town, to make suggestions regarding protection of the river corridor. Kate suggested Mike Kline. Alex has money in the planning budget to contribute toward this. Haystack Crossing and Hinesburg Center II developments both impact the Patrick Brook. The property line between these two properties is problematic. It

would be desirable to coordinate efforts between the two developers so that river corridor restoration could be achieved. Site visit (Mitch, Alex, Kate and Bob) was very helpful. There is significant erosion on the North Side. Mike Kline could provide useful insight into the functioning of Patrick Brook. Longer term vision is to have these pieces of property in one management unit so that protection and restoration could be achieved. Mike Kline's assessment could be integrated into the Natural Resource Inventory. Alex would oversee this arrangement, in consultation with the CC. No need for the CC to approve this, since it would fall under Alex's budget and management. Timeframe needs to be soon (before the snow falls.) Bob & Kate will get one or two questions to Alex, so he can send on to Mike Kline

6. Update on land conservation fund – The CC would like to fund the Land Conservation fund on a regular basis. In the past, the CC made specific requests and grants. The CC would like to find a funding source that would keep the fund growing over time. Land Preservation Fund has a current balance of \$14,000 (+/-). The process for requesting a percentage of the tax revenue to go toward conservation would be to make a request in the CC budget and present that to the Selectboard. CC decided to take this up at our next meeting. One idea is to fund the Land Preservation Fund from the CC total budget and reallocate current budget amount between our various priorities. Darcie will investigate language of land preservation fund with Andrea Morgante & Missy Ross. She will ask Joy about final deadline for budget submittals, and let Kate know if we need to call a special meeting for budgeting.
7. Hinesburg Center II preliminary plat application: CC shared with Alex that it has thoughts regarding stormwater and fill. Alex reported that this DRB discussion will happen at one of the meetings in December. Meg will call Alex tomorrow.
8. Annual report: discuss/review – Kate had a few corrections. Meg will edit and send annual report.
9. Review minutes of October 13, 2020 meeting – Meg made motion to accept. Bob seconded. Minutes accepted.
10. Nature Notes – Bobcat kittens, wood frog, birch leaf experiment, pileated woodpecker.
11. Reminders & Adjourn (8:38 PM)