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North Hampton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes – November 8, 2022

Administrative: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. via Channel 22 from the Town Hall. The agenda was posted in compliance with RSA 91-A requirements.

Roll Call: Members present: Lisa Wilson, (Chair), Kathy Grant, (Vice Chair), Dave Ciccalone, Lauri Etela, Audrey Prior and Phil Thayer. **Members of the Public:** David Burdick, Mike Parsont, Peter Steckler, and Geoff Wilson, Rob Omberg, and Alyson Ryder.

Approval of September 12, 2022 Draft Minutes: After review of the September 12, 2022 minutes *a motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Audrey Prior, to approve the minutes.* The motion carried with Phil Thayer abstaining.

New Business:

Philbrick Pond Salt Marsh Restoration: The Philbrick Pond Saltmarsh restoration team discussed the salt marsh restoration planning project, introduced the pilot project in more detail, and discussed the wetlands permit application process. Geoff Wilson, Co-Manager Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, and Pete Steckler, Principal, Northeast Conservation Services, discussed salt marsh history with a power point presentation discussing significance of saltmarshes along the North Atlantic U.S. coastline.

The discussion of the history of salt marshes explained how in the past salt marshes were a place where Native Americans gathered food and European colonists found the saltmarsh as a ready source of grasses and hay for livestock. Past farming techniques from the 17th century and the creation of marsh ditches that occurred from the 1800's to the 1960's to increase the yield of hay disrupted the natural marsh tidal flow. Geoff and Pete explained how proposed ditch remediation and micro runnel techniques will help restore the tidal flows to a more natural condition. The restoration work will increase coastal resilience through improved floodwater storage capacity in the marsh system. One of the project objectives includes future monitoring of the growth of invasive species and phragmites to help reduce their growth.

The project team and Conservation Commission thanked Rob Omberg, Philbrick Pond Salt Marsh land owner, for supporting the work of the project team and providing access from his property. Funding for this project is provided, in part, by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program Watershed Assistance Grant program.

North Hampton Agricultural Commission: Audrey Prior, Chair of the Agricultural Commission, discussed expanding the community garden into the lower portion of the parcel and explained that there is a waiting list for plots. It was also noted that there are plots that are currently assigned to individuals who do not appear to be using or maintaining them. The Agricultural Commission received funds which could be used to expand the garden and help maintain it. The Agricultural Commission proposed mowing the lower portion of the field and proposed adding the new plots in the spring of 2023. Members discussed the challenges of mowing the existing narrower grassy areas where ticks are an ongoing problem for the gardeners. The Conservation Commission asked to review a plan for the proposed expansion that addresses some of the issues discussed during the meeting. Agricultural Commissioners Audrey Prior and Phil Thayer along with Alyson Ryder, Community Garden liaison to the

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Agricultural Commission, will work together to present a plan for the proposed expansion to be reviewed by the Conservation Commission during its January 10, 2022 meeting.

Old Business:

Conservation Easement Subcommittee Update: Denis Kokernak installed the No Hunting signage on the Boies Wildlife Preserve. The No Hunting signs indicate that the wildlife preserve is town owned conservation land.

Trail Maintenance Update: Phil Thayer reported that the Dustin-Booker Farm Eagle Scout bridge project has been completed. Phil plans to repair and stabilize another bridge along the Dustin-Booker Farm trail using concrete blocks which he purchased at Home Depot for \$50.00. ***A motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Audrey Prior, to authorize an expenditure up to \$200.00 for concrete blocks and other materials for Phil Thayer to complete the bridge repairs.*** The motion carried.

Conservation Signage: Kate Dardinski completed the trail maps and brochure for the Corbett Farm and Robie Conservation Land, Dustin-Booker Farm, Forest Hills Farm, and the Oliver Brook Trail to The Little River Conservancy. Phil Thayer discussed plans to create another trail on Corbet Farm this year and suggested adding the new trail to the Corbett Farm and Robie Conservation Land map before finalizing the map order.

Septic System Inventory Update: Lisa Wilson will contact Rob Pruyne, RPC, to inquire why the first column for lines 1162-1172 on the Septic System Inventory database were left blank. Kathy organized the Excel spreadsheet by street name which she sent in a digital file to the members of the Commission. The Commission discussed next steps to include sending letters reminding homeowners in vulnerable areas of the need to maintain and pump out their septic systems.

Other Business: Lisa Wilson will contact Jan to update the Conservation Commission website page to include a digital version of the trail guide that accompanies the new trail maps.

Correspondence: The Commission received a membership renewal notice from the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC). ***A motion was made by Phil Thayer, duly seconded by Kathy Grant, to authorize an expenditure of \$400.00 to pay the renewal fee.*** The motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, ***a motion was made by Phil Thayer, duly seconded by Audrey Prior,*** to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Moore
Recording Secretary

“These minutes were prepared within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by the majority vote by the Commission”.