

Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes
Monday, August 5, 2019
Atkinson Town Hall

Approved September 9, 2019

Members Present:

Paul Wainwright, Chair
Denise Legault, Vice Chair
Pete McVay, Secretary
Dan Kimball
Dennis Krause
Jeff Nenart
Scott Kukshel
Tim Dziechowski (Alternate)
(arrived late)
Bill Steele (Alternate)

Others Present:

Brent Ebner, Hampstead Conservation Commission
Paul DiMaggio, Atkinson Planning Board (arrived late)
Adam Torris

1) Call to Order & Attendance:

Chair Wainwright called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, August 5, 2019. Chair Wainwright reviewed the attendance list and introduced the new Recording Clerk. Since all 7 regular members are in attendance, neither of the alternates will be voting tonight.

2) Review & Approval of Minutes:

Chair Wainwright requested a motion to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2019 public meeting of the Atkinson Conservation Commission, as written. Member McVay made note of one spelling error and Member Kimball requested the removal of a sentence due to inaccuracy.

Member Nenart made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2019 public session of the Atkinson Conservation Commission, with the edits noted above. Member McVay seconded the motion. Member Legault chose to abstain since she was not at the meeting. Six members of the Atkinson Conservation Commission present at the July 1, 2019 meeting voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/1.

3) Treasurer's Report:

Chair Wainwright presented the latest Treasurer's Report. A copy is attached. Invoices submitted for the past month are highlighted. Chair Wainwright stated that the Commission is very close to having all of their yearly budget either spent or committed. Chair Wainwright requested a motion to approve the following three charges:

- New Critter Camera – Tim: \$77.93
- New Critter Camera – Paul: \$143.65
- Stihl Hedge Trimmer, Battery & Charger: \$449.96

Chair Wainwright explained that two cameras were purchased due to a miscommunication between he and Alternate Dziechowski, and that his purchase has a higher dollar value because it has more pixels as well as a steel case. Chair Wainwright stated that a new industrial-strength hedge trimmer was necessary to help with the ongoing Bittersweet vine removal effort. Chair Wainwright finally stated that although he is requesting a motion to approve these charges, he will wait until the end of the year to submit the hedge trimmer expense for reimbursement to make sure there is enough money in the budget; if there is not enough money in the budget, Chair Wainwright will just maintain ownership of the hedge trimmer.

Member Legault made a motion to approve the charges of two new critter cameras as well as the hedge trimmer. Member Kimball seconded the motion. Seven members of the Atkinson Conservation Commission present at the August 5, 2019 meeting voted in favor. Vote: 7/0/0.

Chair Wainwright indicated that during the first seven months of the year, the Commission paid their Recording Clerk about \$100 each month through a temporary staffing agency. Due to the new Recording Clerk being an employee of the Town, the Commission is paying a lower hourly wage but must pay into Social Security & FICA. As a result, Chair Wainwright is projecting about \$500.00 will be spent on meeting minute recording through the end of the year.

Alternate Dziechowski arrived during this discussion.

Chair Wainwright made reference to the previously approved, and therefore committed, charges for the services of Charlie Moreno & Julie LaBranche for assistance with various plans. Chair Wainwright made reference to the yearly dues committed to the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions. Chair Wainwright stated that the Commission has yet to pay Member Kimball for his mowing services and has yet to pay Adam Torris for his efforts towards repairing the canoe launch dock as part of his Eagle Scout project. Chair Wainwright stated that with all of the above commitments, the Commission has only a small amount of money left to utilize between now and the end of the year. Chair Wainwright stated that although most of the money has been accounted for, he is not concerned because he's thought about most of the categories that haven't yet come up. Chair Wainwright invited discussion about the Treasurer's Report. There was none.

See attached Treasurer's Report

4) Adam Torris – Eagle Scout Project – Canoe Launch:

Chair Wainwright opened the floor to Adam Torris for an update on his Eagle Scout project. Adam stated that his project is nearing completion. Adam stated that Atkinson Road Agent Ted Stewart put in a combination of gravel and dirt sloping away from the road to improve the parking area; Mr. Stewart was able to do this for free. Adam replaced eight boards total in the existing canoe launch dock and although they are a different color, he believes it looks much better and will last much longer.

Adam stated that he stained the dock with marine stain donated by White Street Paint in Plaistow. White Street Paint also donated yellow paint, and white spray paint for the berms in the parking area. Adam added that the freshly painted berms were also stenciled with the words "Loading and Unloading Zone" and "Canoe Launch Parking" in strategic locations. Chair Wainwright stated that when the berms were first installed, Mr. Stewart secured the berms in place with rebar, and he asked Adam if that was done this time as well. Adam stated that as of his last trip he didn't see any rebar but he would check with Mr. Stewart to see if this could be done. Adam stated that he also cleared out all of the brush and debris so the entire area looks much neater.

Chair Wainwright stated that upon his last inspection it looked as though some of the floats on the dock will need to be replaced again. Adam stated that he looked into replacing them but he would need to lift up the entire dock and realized that this wasn't feasible. Chair Wainwright stated that this is not a problem because the Town normally replaces them when the water level lowers later in the year.

Adam stated that Mr. Stewart suggested a white-on-green color scheme for the sign and to hang it on the telephone pole. Mr. Stewart stated that although the utility company doesn't normally like signs hanging on their telephone poles, a secluded area such as this wouldn't draw much attention from utility workers. Member Legault stated that there used to be a sign hanging right at the canoe launch ramp and asked whether or not it was still there. Adam stated that it had fallen and broken but his plan is to repair it, clean it up and rehang it.

Member Krause made a motion to approve Adam Torris's Eagle Scout Canoe Launch Area contingent upon 1) adding rebar to the berms, 2) hanging the new canoe launch sign on the telephone pole at the beginning of Stickney Road, and 3) repairing the original canoe launch sign and rehang it by the launch dock. Member Legault seconded the motion. Seven members of the Atkinson Conservation Commission present at the August 5, 2019 meeting voted in favor. Vote: 7/0/0.

5) Trails and Grants Working Group Report:

Chair Wainwright asked the Commission how this project was coming along. Member McVay stated that he was working on creating an online forum but discovered that it was cost-prohibitive and was probably not worth going through with that idea. Member McVay stated that he set up two meeting times to discuss Trails & Grants at the Kimball Library. Member McVay hopes that these meetings will yield administrative ideas to ensure the Commission is acting in accordance with the Town's wishes, and also to

increase resident participation in the upkeep of the Town's trails. Member McVay stated that the first meetings will be Tuesday, August 13th from 6:30PM to 8:00PM and Tuesday, August 20th from 6:30PM to 8:00PM at the Kimball Library. If any residents are interested in attending these meetings they should send an email to conservation@atkinson-nh.gov.

Chair Wainwright asked for an update on the maps. Member Krause stated that all the trails blazed have been mapped and that he created a QR code with links to the "All Trails" mobile application. Member Krause passed around a laminated map of the Town's trails and stated that they may last longer if they were printed on outdoor-rated hard plastic.

Member Krause stated that the next portion of the map project is to have the Town's trail maps printed on paper so hikers can have a hard copy map to bring with them on the trails. Chair Wainwright asked Brent Ebner what Hampstead did when they printed their trail maps. Mr. Ebner stated that many years ago Hampstead printed their trail maps on a heavier duty water-resistant (not water-proof) paper for hikers to bring into the woods with them, although he couldn't remember exactly what kind of paper was used. Member Krause stated that it is his intention to include a diagram of the Town to show each of the forest area locations.

Chair Wainwright stated how pleased he was with the work being done towards this effort.

6) Land Conservation Planning – Review & Discuss Proposed Content:

Chair Wainwright stated that after reading many surrounding town conservation plans, he came up with a proposed outline, which he has reviewed with Julie LaBranche, who had comments but no major issues with the outline's content. Chair Wainwright asked the Commission if anyone had thoughts or comments on the proposed outline.

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 1 of the plan would summarize the purpose of the Land Conservation Plan, and Section 2 would contain information about the Commission. Chair Wainwright continued that Section 3 will be about why it's important to conserve land, and stated that this section will be written by Ms. LaBranche.

Member Kimball stated that he'd like to see a listing the financial advantages and benefits of having public open space, to which Chair Wainwright replied that this information would be contained in Section 3.

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 4 would contain a summary of the different methods for conserving land, such as fee-simple purchase, conservation easements, or restrictive deed clauses. Chair Wainwright continued that while reading other plans he learned that the best method for conserving land is not to own it but to have a deeded easement on the land that is owned by a third party such as the Southeast Land Trust. The reasoning behind this is that the Town may purchase land and vote for it to be dedicated as conservation land, but in future years could turn around a vote to use the land for other purposes, or even sell it.

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 5 of the plan would contain the current state of land conservation in Atkinson. Chair Wainwright continued that the GRANIT database doesn't contain up-to-date information when making conservation land maps because it is frequently out of date. Chair Wainwright is proposing to work with Avatar, who manages our tax maps, to create a new set of conservation-related layers. From talking with Julie LaBranche, it is his understanding that GRANIT would receive those updates and then be up to date. Chair Wainwright presented a list of layers he would like to see.

See attached list of tax map layers.

Chair Wainwright asked the Commission what other layers they think would be useful to include. Member Nenart stated that it would be useful to include map layers that specify which conservation land is for public use versus conservation land that is not for public use. Member McVay stated that it would be useful to include map layers showing aquifers & surface waters, wildlife trails & corridors, and forest & soil types.

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 6 would contain attributes that make land worthy of conservation (for example, wildlife habitats, protecting wetlands, etc.).

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 7 would contain a map of Town with color coding indicating which parts are more desirable for conservation. This data would be collected by Ms. LaBranche during focus group discussions and scored using the Delphi scoring method, and a map would then be generated by Ms. LaBranche. The Commission agreed that this map could lead to concern among residents if they realize that their land is a desirable area of Town for conservation purposes. So the explanation of this map should be handled delicately.

Chair Wainwright stated that Section 8 would include a summary of sources of grant funding, and Section 9 would include conclusions and acknowledgements.

Chair Wainwright stated that this is just a start to defining the plan's scope and content, and that the Commission would have most of next year to do the actual work. Chair Wainwright stated that he is trying to secure grant funding to help pay for the costs of creating this plan, and he will be applying for a New Hampshire "moose license plate" grant. The application deadline is September 13.

Chair Wainwright finally stated that he is very sensitive to the residents feeling singled out by this study, and although the Commission may discuss specific parcels of land during the creation of this plan, the published plan should not contain references to specific parcels so that residents hopefully will not feel "targeted."

Paul DiMaggio of the Atkinson Planning Board arrived at the end of this discussion.

7) Brief Reports & Other Business:

a. 3rd Saturday walks in the woods:

- August 17: Greg Jordan – Sawyer – Tree identification and more
- September 21: Marshall Land?

Chair Wainwright stated that the walk in the woods in July was a great success, had a turnout of about fourteen guests in addition to the four Commission members and a good time was had by all. Chair Wainwright continued that the July and August walks have been so well received that he'd like to plan a walk for September as well, and thinks the Marshall land may be a good spot for it. Commission members were in general agreement.

b. Installation of gates – Now complete – Thanks Dan!

Chair Wainwright thanked Member Kimball for the installation of the new gates on the Chambers-Fila Town forest and Orr Town forest. Member Kimball stated that he still had one more six-foot to twelve-foot gate left over from the project in case the Commission could think of a good use for it.

c. Sawyer invasives – Walked the land with Charlie Moreno, consulting forester

Chair Wainwright stated that he and Charlie Moreno walked the eastern part of the Sawyer Town Forest a few weeks ago, and stated that Charlie is in the process of proposing a plan to deal with the abundance of Bittersweet and other invasive plants in the area. During the walk, Mr. Moreno said he is thinking about a three-part approach to managing the Bittersweet. In some areas of the forest the infestation is so great that the plan might be containment rather than removal. The second part would be to clear a strip of invasive plants by mechanical means, separating the relatively healthy forest from the badly infested area. The third part would be to manually clear the few invasive plants from the relatively healthy areas that comprise the majority of the forest. To do this, Mr. Moreno suggested organizing a large volunteer effort, with a training portion to show volunteers what to look for and how to pull the vines properly before they begin to take over the trees. Chair Wainwright stated that if the Bittersweet is pulled and dropped in place, most of it will not re-root, so this may be an effective removal technique.

Chair Wainwright stated that Mr. Moreno is working on a cost estimate to have professionals come in for the badly infested areas. Chair Wainwright finally stated that he is thinking about applying for a New Hampshire "moose license plate" grant to help pay for this effort as well. Members of the Commission were in general agreement with this initiative.

d. Charlie George's interest in the McPherson land

Chair Wainwright stated that Charlie George is still interested in purchasing the piece of the Ruth McPherson land that is between his property and Main Street. Chair Wainwright stated that he is unsure what to do. Scott Kukshel suggested that the Land Conservation Plan discussed earlier could address the circumstances under which the Town might consider selling or trading conservation lands. He went on to say that the Commission has traded conservation land for other land in the past when there has been a clear conservation advantage to do so, so Mr. George's

request is not necessarily off the table. Member Kimball stated that there has to be an overall conservation advantage to any land trade.

Alternate Dziechowski stated that the McPherson land was a gift from Ruth McPherson, and it was voted at Town Meeting to be a Town Forest in the early 1990's. Chair Wainwright concurred, and stated that before the land could be sold or traded, there would have to be a warrant article at Town Meeting to undo the designation as a Town Forest. Alternate Dziechowski stated that no one can force us to sell land.

Member Kukshel stated that Mr. George doesn't want to develop the land, but would like control over maintaining it. Member Kukshel also stated that Mr. George said he'd be willing to put an easement on the land, and also brought up the fact that any money Mr. George spends on the land could be used to acquire other lands. Members Legault and Nenart reminded Member Kukshel that this is still a difficult precedent to set in the eyes of the Town. Member Kukshel stated that it might not be a bad precedent to set if someone is willing to pay money for the land and then put an easement on it.

Chair Wainwright stated that he'd inform Mr. George that the Commission is still discussing this matter, and that the Commission is trying to come up with a plan to move forward.

e. ATVs on Marshall land

Member Krause stated that during his trailblazing he saw a lot of ATV tracks on this land and noticed that the sign prohibiting ATV use had been removed. Brent Ebner stated that this is an issue in Hampstead as well, since the riders feel entitled to use the town land any way they see fit. Brent Ebner stated that Hampstead increased the fines for ATV use in prohibited areas, but the problem is that the riders need to be caught in the act in order to enforce those fines. Chair Wainwright stated that maybe the new critter cameras could be used to identify riders and possibly enforce the fines for ATV use in prohibited areas. Alternate Steele stated that it would be important to replace the sign prohibiting ATV use so riders wouldn't be able to claim ignorance to the rule, to which Chair Wainwright agreed and mentioned that he has signs ready to post. Chair Wainwright asked the Commission to start thinking about strategic places to post the new cameras to try and prevent future ATV use on Town trails.

f. Brendan Road – Bob Clark 5'x400'

Chair Wainwright stated that Bob Clark initially wanted to donate this land to the Town but has decided to sell it to a neighbor and put restrictive covenants in the

deed so it cannot be sold and used by the neighbor in Massachusetts to put a driveway across it.

g. Paige Farm – Alteration of Terrain permit – Endangered species

Chair Wainwright stated that the Paige Farm Alteration of Terrain permit has been denied by the State, but he doesn't think this is the last the Commission will hear on this matter.

h. Other business

Chair Wainwright asked the Commission if anyone had other business to discuss at this meeting. There was none.

8) Next Meetings:

The next two regular Conservation Commission meetings will be Mondays September 9, and October 7, 2019.

10) Save the Date: NH ACC Annual Conference: Saturday, November 2, 2019

11) Adjournment:

Chair Wainwright requested a motion to adjourn.

Member Kimball made a motion to adjourn the August 5, 2019 meeting of the Atkinson Conservation Commission. Member Krause seconded the motion. Seven members of the Atkinson Conservation Commission present at the August 5, 2019 meeting voted in favor. Vote: 7/0/0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zachary Gilberti, Recording Clerk

Attachments:

- a) Treasurer's Report
- b) List of tax map layers proposed for the Land Conservation Plan

Town of Atkinson Conservation Commission 2019 Budget Tracking

Account Number	Description	TM Approved 2019 Budget	What	Amount	Date Prepared	Date Submitted	Amount Submitted	YTD Total	YTD Unspent
40.46111.110.00	RECORDING CLERK	\$ 998.00	Minutes: Aug - Dec (estimate) Minutes, Jan 7, 2019	\$500.00 \$82.50	1/14/2019		\$82.50	\$ 82.50	\$ 915.50
40.45111.220.00	FICA	\$ 1.00						\$ -	\$ 1.00
40.45111.225.00	Medicare	\$ 1.00						\$ -	\$ 1.00
40.46111.390.00	OTHER PROF SERVICES	\$ 2,500.00	Charlie Moreno - Sawyer Invasive Planning Julie Labranche - Cons Plan Part 1 Minutes, July 1, 2019 Lavelle - Merrill Drive Survey Charlie Moreno - Chadwick inspection Minutes, June 3, 2019 Minutes, May 6, 2019 Minutes, Apr 1, 2019 Minutes, Mar 3, 2019 Minutes, Feb 4, 2019	\$1,463.00 \$750.00 \$84.00 \$787.50 \$450.00 \$90.00 \$36.00 \$132.00 \$120.00 \$156.00	7/26/2019 7/8/2019 6/20/2019 6/18/2019 5/27/2019 4/24/2019 3/26/2019 2/21/2019	7/26/2019 7/8/2019 6/20/2019 6/18/2019 5/27/2019 4/26/2019 3/26/2019 2/22/2019	\$84.00 \$787.50 \$450.00 \$90.00 \$36.00 \$132.00 \$120.00 \$156.00	\$ 1,855.50	\$ 644.50
40.46111.550.00	PRINTING AND BINDING	\$ 1.00						\$ -	\$ 1.00
40.46111.560.00	DUES/SUBS/MEMBERSHIPS	\$ 400.00	NH ACC Dues (estimate) NH Ass'n of Natural Resource Scientists	\$425.00 \$20.00	3/26/2019	3/26/2019	\$20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 380.00
40.46111.620.00	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 1.00						\$ -	\$ 1.00
40.46111.625.00	POSTAGE	\$ 1.00						\$ -	\$ 1.00
40.46111.650.00	CARE OF GROUNDS	\$ 3,000.00	Mowing - Dan Gates and Posts - Dan Sign Posts (from late December) Registry of Deeds (Tim) Terrain Navigator Pro License Replacement float for Town Dock, -2% Ebner reimbursement: Junction Markers	\$900.00 \$595.03 \$37.18 \$3.00 \$361.00 \$126.89 \$103.68	5/13/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 1/24/2019 1/2/2019	5/13/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 3/26/2019 1/25/2019 1/7/2019	\$595.03 \$37.18 \$3.00 \$361.00 \$124.35 \$103.68	\$ 1,224.24	\$ 1,775.76
40.46111.740.00	NEW EQUIPMENT	\$ 300.00	New Critter Camera - Tim New Critter Camera - Paul Stihl Hedge Trimmer, battery, and charger	\$77.93 \$143.65 \$449.96				\$ -	\$ 300.00
40.46111.820.00	MILEAGE	\$ 74.00	Meeting w/ Eben Lewis 1/2/19 - 98 mi + \$4	\$60.84	3/26/2019	3/26/2019	\$60.84	\$ 60.84	\$ 13.16
40.46111.840.00	SPECIAL PROGRAMS	\$ 1,000.00	Eagle Project - Adam (estimate) Barry Conservation Camp	\$300.00 \$315.00	3/26/2019	3/26/2019	\$315.00	\$ 315.00	\$ 685.00
40.46111.850.00	EDUCATION & CONFERENCES	\$ 250.00						\$ -	\$ 250.00
40.46111.875.00	SIGNS	\$ 500.00	Conservation Easement Boundary Markers	\$304.77	1/28/2019	1/29/2019	\$304.77	\$ 304.77	\$ 195.23
TOTALS		\$ 9,027.00						\$ 3,862.85	\$ 5,164.15

Committed \$5,009.54 \$ 154.61

GIS Mapping Overlays - Request for Quotation

Atkinson Conservation Commission

Here is the information we would like to include as separate layers:

1. Town Forest lands
2. Other town-owned land
3. Dedicated Open Space from cluster developments
4. LWCF-funded land (distinguishing conservation and recreation uses)
5. Current Use parcels (distinguishing which have public access allowed)
6. Privately-owned land on which there is a conservation easement
7. Prime Wetlands (GIS data exists)
8. Conservation Trails (GIS data exists)

For items 1 thru 6, we would be responsible for supplying you with lists of map and lot numbers.

For items 7 and 8, we would supply compatible GIS files per your specifications.