

**Town of Chester  
Conservation Commission  
April 10, 2018  
Approved Minutes**

**Present were:**

Chairman Chuck Myette  
Aaron Hume  
Kristine Snyder  
Victor Chouinard  
Ted Broadwater  
Deb Munson

**Absent were:**

Baron Richardson  
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale  
Selectman Dick Trask

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Myette called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

**2. Public Hearings**

**A. Hawkins**

Chairman Myette advised that Ed Hawkins will not be here this evening. Mr. Broadwater has copies of the easement and map. The property is 28 acres combined as two separate lots, purchased with a lot line adjustment by merger. Mr. Broadwater advised that it has been surveyed. Some restrictions that the owner requested included no trail riding, hiking is ok, no farming except for small purpose use. Mr. Broadwater presented that there is a small pond near the house. Chairman Myette clarified that it is the other pond to the upper right shown on the map.

Mr. Hawkins has not signed the easement yet. Chairman Myette would like to see how the property is owned, whether it is just him or him and his wife on the deed. Mrs. Hawkins' name will be added to the easement, if necessary. Mr. Broadwater will check on that and make any revisions.

Chairman Myette asked if there were any questions and being none closed the hearing to the public at 7:15 pm for deliberations.

***Mr. Broadwater motioned to accept the Conservation Easement. Mr. Hume seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.***

Chairman Myette advised that once Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins have signed the easement it will go to the Board of Selectmen, not this Thursday but possibly next, for signature and then be recorded.

## **B. Chouinard Easement – Harantis Lake Road**

Chairman Myette discussed the terms of the proposed easement, its use, limitations and purpose. Mr. Chouinard would like it to be a wildlife sanctuary with limits on forestry and timbering, excluding domestic purposes so that it will have a low impact, with non-motorized vehicles. In the past he was against hunting, fishing and removal of trees with best management practices. Mr. Chouinard expressed concerns with the language on page five which left it to the owner's discretion to post or not post and stated that the no hunting provision was something he wanted to restrict beyond his ownership. Ms. Munson clarified that the language concerning that was contained in another paragraph and that leaving in both would restrict the use as well as giving the owner the option to post. Chairman Myette asked if the owner had the legal description for the deed and Mr. Chouinard will send that to him.

Chairman Myette asked if there were any further questions and being none closed the hearing to the public at 7:30 pm for deliberations.

*Mr. Broadwater motioned to accept the Conservation Easement. Mr. Hume seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.*

## **Old Business**

### **Minutes of February 13, 2018**

Mr. Broadwater and Mr. Hume reminded there was no March meeting minutes to review as there had been a snow storm that day.

Ms. Munson indicated that the February minutes contained language concerning a violation on Haverhill Road that should be either removed or moved to lines 202 to 203.

*Mr. Hume motioned to accept the February 13, 2018 minutes, amended as indicated by Ms. Munson. Ms. Munson seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.*

### **Treasurer's Report (Chuck)**

Chairman Myette gave the report in Mr. Richardson's absence. There is \$800 in the budget plus \$261 with \$200 for Exeter River and \$50 for dues and seminars, \$538.75 remaining. There is one unpaid bill for Wadleigh, Starr & Peters for \$35.00 relative to the easement and also an invoice with RCCD for the baseline reports.

*Mr. Broadwater motioned to pay the \$35 bill to Wadleigh, Starr & Peters. Mr. Hume seconded his motion, with all in favor, so moved.*

*Ms. Munson motioned to pay the conservation easement baseline report invoice with RCCD for \$910.00. Mr. Broadwater seconded her motion, with all in favor, so moved.*

73 **Trails (Aaron)**

74 With the inclement weather Mr. Hume had nothing new to update.

75 **Spring Hill Farm**

76 Chairman Myette advised that they were having a clean-up day at Spring Hill Farm and it would  
77 be nice to have maps for that.

78 **Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee**

79 Chairman Myette reported that the 12-member committee, with 9 voting members and 3  
80 alternates, is working on establishing their Mission Statement and Management Plan concerning  
81 the use of the fields and buildings and an RFP concerning haying the fields. The Trust has older  
82 equipment, so some may prefer to use their own for haying.

83 There has been discussion concerning rental of the high tunnel and cleaning things up and  
84 creating a museum area for photos, memorabilia, records, and equipment, a loom. The trust  
85 members, Richard LeBlanc, and Mr. Myette, are taking care of the cow, fences, equipment and  
86 water. Recently there was an unfounded report that the cow had gone missing prior to a snow  
87 storm but was found where she was expected to be. Ms. Munson is concerned that had she not  
88 been returned before it began snowing heavily it would have been a real challenge to get her  
89 back in.

90 Chairman Myette continued that the personal belongings of the trust are being inventoried and  
91 put under cover.

92 Mr. Broadwater asked if the heat was on so that pipes won't freeze. Chairman Myette advised  
93 that yes, there was heat and the security system with access codes and breaks for the windows  
94 and doors. The codes will indicate who has been in and out of the property from time to time.

95 **Agricultural Committee**

96 Chairman Myette indicated that they were still in need of some representation from Conservation  
97 on the Agricultural committee and discussed Mrs. LeBlanc's upcoming proposal for a Foodscape  
98 presentation at the Farm, blending vegetables and herbs in with the landscape while feeding off  
99 each other.

100 Chairman Myette advised that bringing animals to the Town Fair did not go well last year and  
101 will most likely not be repeated so they will need to change things up a little and focus on their  
102 booth. There were problems with transporting and visitors trying to feed inappropriate things to  
103 the animals.

104 Chairman Myette suggested presenting some of the canoe trip pictures, Exeter to the bay. Ms.  
105 Munson suggested that the compost bins that were done one year, they sold at cost, were a great  
106 hit.

107 Ms. Munson indicated that the UNH Extension had an invasive species presentation and maybe  
108 Spring Hill Farm could put on something like that.

109 **Wason Pond Conservation Commission**

110 Chairman Myette advised that Wason Pond is also having a clean-up day and are looking for  
111 another person to serve on that committee. They are working on the security system there and  
112 the barn repairs. They are uncertain if the inmates will be available to help with the siding and  
113 may need volunteers for that.

114 The proposed pavilion will be 20'x40' timber frame and most likely begin that project next  
115 summer.

116 The Pounder will be coming up soon. Mr. Hume who was unfamiliar with that event asked for  
117 details. Mr. Broadwater explained that it was a highly popular charity fundraising event that  
118 drew close to 1000 people with a 5k run and obstacle courses.

119 **Easements, Monitoring & Stewardship**

120 Chairman Myette passed around a copy of the baseline reports on Premiere Estates and Deep  
121 Hole Road. Chairman Myette explained the process of monitoring by the Commission following  
122 receipt of the baseline reports from RCCD. Any violations are noted and periodically updated.

123 Ms. Munson indicated that violations were identified and should be checked out. On Fiddlehead  
124 (Premiere Estates) there was evidence of dumping. Chairman Myette asked Ms. Hoijer to bring  
125 copies of both to the Building Inspector tomorrow morning to ask him to inspect those.

126 Chairman Myette read the notification from Division of Forest Lands for Dick Lewis on Map 1-  
127 Lot 72 for timbering property impacted by the Hemlock pest, Woolly Adelgids.

128 **Strategic Land Protection Committee**

129 Chairman Myette advised that Conservation had some discussions concerning North Woods,  
130 Pulpit and Crowley Road which were taken to the BOS for approval to move forward with a  
131 Warrant Article. A majority of the Budget Committee were in favor and now should be looking  
132 at the Warrant Article process.

133 Chairman Myette proposed that Conservation's contribution, with approximately \$700,000 on  
134 account and an additional \$30,000 in the Forestry account, with future current use monies  
135 coming in, should be considered of \$500,000.00.

136 Ms. Munson asked what the dollar figure is and Chairman Myette advised that approximately \$2  
137 million is the ballpark figure. With Conservation kicking in \$500,000.00 the additional monies  
138 would come from a 1-10 year bond put out and voted at Town Meeting and any grants or  
139 donations that could lower that tax impact.

140 Chairman Myette advised that Mr. Hadik from the Planning Board had put together a detailed  
141 cost avoidance scenario projecting the expenses associated with the remote location, especially  
142 in relation to services with school, police, fire, emergencies, extra staff, sewer, water, storm  
143 runoff, the conservation of the Black Gum swamp. There would be a Conservation easement  
144 filed but it would not be as restrictive as past easements. It would protect the Black Gum swamp

but utilize the property, especially the front area, for recreation, ballfields, cemetery and even possible future substation for emergency vehicles.

Chairman Myette presented that from a cost avoidance aspect, the payback for the bond would be realized in savings to the town in year seven. Mr. Hadik used a ratio of .82 students per household, although realistically with 3-4 bedroom homes the developer had proposed, it could be greater. Chairman Myette advised that by years 8-12 the cost savings will be even greater.

Chairman Myette advised that Chester's tax base is reliant upon revenues from residential owners. There are no large buildings, strip malls that could pay more than services require.

Chairman Myette advised that the Crowley Woods purchase would be largely a cost avoidance concept with conservation benefits.

Ms. Munson asked if Candia's conservation had considered contributing. Chairman Myette explained the greenbelt project with the Bear Paw Regional Greenbelt system. Ms. Munson added that the costs concerning the traffic and road would be significant to Candia if Crowley Woods were developed. Mr. Broadwater asked if we were talking to their Conservation Commission and Chairman Myette said that they are.

Chairman Myette approached the map and delineated the greenbelt area where trails would link into that.

Chairman Myette asked Ms. Snyder and Mr. Chouinard about their attendance recently at the Saving Special Places seminar. Ms. Snyder stated that the action plans of NH Fish & Game's wildlife were a specific topic, concerning conservation of swaths of land for optimum wildlife purposes. Fish & Game talked about hiking trails and buffers with animals and song birds needing 100-200' sometimes more and that's something to consider in the future if we were to create any new trails. Mr. Chouinard added, that the trails that go around a property and loop back were not preferable to those that go out directly to a point and head back. Chairman Myette advised that if they would like to be reimbursed for attending the seminar to send in a copy of their paid check.

## **Phase II Age Friendly Housing & Diversity**

Ms. Munson advised that Chester had been chosen for the Phase II Age-Friendly area to improve the lack of housing diversity and public transportation. Mr. Hadik from the Planning Board and Ms. Munson are liaisons with SNH Planning, another committee who is gathering information on what people would like. They will create a survey and meet on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm, with focus groups sponsored by AARP. Perhaps changing Zoning to contribute areas that will accommodate this. Chairman Myette added that most of the 3-4 bedroom homes in Chester fall in the market range of \$400,000. You don't see 1-2 bedroom cottages, capes or ranches, the young people can afford the \$150,000 home. They have had little success with the 55 and over community.

Mr. Chouinard advised that the Town of Windham had recently voted to keep them out.

183    **Adjournment**

184    *Mr. Broadwater motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm. Mr. Hume seconded his*  
185    *motion, with all in favor, so moved.*

186    Respectfully submitted,

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190    Nancy J. Hoijer,  
191    Recording Secretary