

**Town of Chester
Conservation Commission
September 10, 2019
7:00 PM
Approved Minutes**

Present:

Chairman Victor Chouinard
Selectman Chuck Myette, Liaison
Kristina Snyder
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale
Ted Broadwater
Deb Munson
Aaron Hume
Rick Sibley, Alternate

Absent:

Baron Richardson

Guests:

Call to Order:

Chairman Chouinard called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing (previously advertised)

Loranger Property Purchase and Sales Agreement

Chair Chouinard opened the hearing to the public for questions and comments at 7:03 PM.

Chair Chouinard read out loud the first three paragraphs of the Agreement with a purchase price of \$230,000 and described the property which is Map/Lot #9-92, 46 acres with 676' of frontage off Fremont Road. The property is situated above the Exeter River, relatively flat with easy access. Ten acres are in wetlands. An appraisal was done in 2015 which was very thorough, and the property is offered at that 2015 appraisal price, \$40,000 below current evaluation.

Mrs. Neff Ragsdale asked about recreational opportunities. Chair Chouinard noted it was a beautiful piece of property with wildlife viewing with easy access, mostly flat and then drops to the river with 2100' shoreline here could be potential for a canoe launch. Ms. Snyder recommended posting signs to ask users to be respectful of habitats and nesting areas and stay on trails, which the Commission noted could be added to all of its trail maps.

Mr. Sibley asked about surrounding properties. Chair Chouinard indicated to the West is a 50-60-acre parcel with nothing developed behind it. To the East is a private landing strip.

Mr. Broadwater clarified it would be purchased as Town property and thereafter an easement would be put on it. It ties well into another piece that has an easement on it already.

41 Chair Chouinard noted there were no public present.

42 ***Ms. Neff Ragsdale motioned to approve proceeding with the purchase and sales***
 43 ***agreement for the purchase of the Loranger property. Mr. Broadwater seconded the***
 44 ***motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

45 The next step in the process will be to have the Agreement go before the BOS at their next
 46 available meeting and are hopeful to close later this month.

47 Chair Chouinard indicate Finance would be notified to remove funds from the C/D.

48 ***Chair Chouinard motioned to close the public hearing at 7:14 PM. Ms. Snyder seconded***
 49 ***the motion, with all in favor, so moved.***

50 OLD BUSINESS

51 Approval of Minutes

52 May 14, 2019 & August 13, 2019

53 Mr. Broadwater and Ms. Neff Ragsdale recommended changes to the May 14, 2019 and August
 54 13, 2019 minutes.

55 ***Mr. Broadwater motioned to approve the May 14, 2019 and August 13, 2019 minutes as***
 56 ***amended. Ms. Neff Ragsdale seconded the motion. Mr. Hume abstained. Approved 6-0-***
 57 ***1.***

58 Treasurer's Report & FY 20-21 Budget (Kathy)

59 Ms. Neff Ragsdale provided the Treasurer's Report:

60 Certificate of Deposit had a beginning balance of \$810,165.56

61 Funds were withdrawn for the Currier purchase - 110,346.55

62 I interest + 827.39

63 ending Balance \$700,646.40

64 Forestry beginning balance \$ 40,891.29

65 interest + 41.87

66 ending balance \$ 40,933.16

67 Lincoln Lane beginning balance \$ 3,066.20

68 interest + 3.14

69 ending balance \$ 3,069.34

70 Emerson beginning balance \$ 10,141.89

71 interest + 10.38

72 ending balance \$ 10,152.57

73	General Fund	beginning balance	\$110,346.55
74		Added from Illig	+ 40,187.79
75		ending balance	\$150,534.34

76 The Commission discussed approaching the Lincoln Lane HOA concerning the funds they are
77 holding for the bridge and making sure the conservation right of way remains open.

78 Selectman Myette explained the Emerson account was for monitoring.

79 Selectman Myette reported one new bill for publication of the public meeting notice \$60.

80 FY 2020-2021 Budget

81 Ms. Neff Ragsdale reported the FY 2019-2020 Operating Budget was \$954 with \$118 spent on
82 printing leaving a balance of \$836.00. Chair Chouinard noted the proposed FY2020-2021
83 budget was due to Finance on September 23rd.

84 Chair Chouinard will get a spreadsheet from Finance.

85 Selectman Myette noted easements and monitoring fees were approximately \$5,000 and not
86 paid from the operating budget.

87 Ms. Neff Ragsdale noted a number of line items were zeroed that should have a \$1.00 place
88 holder, six total.

89 Ms. Munson proposed increasing the amount budgeted for seminars by \$250.00 as they are
90 doing more presentations.

91 ***Mr. Broadwater motioned to submit a FY2020-2021 operating budget of \$1,210 amended***
92 ***from \$1,204 to include the six \$1 placeholders. Ms. Neff Ragsdale seconded the motion,***
93 ***with all in favor, so moved.***

94 Subcommittee Reports

95 A. Strategic Land Protection Committee - SLPC

96 1. Currier – Hazelton Mill Road

97 2. Illig – Norton Road

98 3. Pipit Estates - easement

99 Chair Chouinard indicated the purchases were closed on the Currier and Illig properties and the
100 BOS approved the Pipit Estates easement.

101 B. Planning Board (Chuck)

102 Selectman Myette reported the Planning Board is working on a new groundwater protection
103 ordinance.

104 C. Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee (Kristina)

105 Ms. Snyder noted the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee is planning their Fall Festival for
106 Saturday, October 5th from 10-4 with a rain date on Sunday.

107 The group is planning a trip to Prescott Farm in Laconia who runs a similar Fall Festival on
108 September 14th.

109 Volunteers will be helping with house and yard clean up before the Festival and they are looking
110 for parking attendants and volunteers to help with kids' games. There will be a raffle with
111 proceeds going to barn restoration. There will be two bands, old tractors and farm equipment,
112 the Lions Club and Mr. Fournier will be cooking his meats and also hot dogs. Kendall Kunelius
113 will be doing a Lumber Jill demonstration. There will be an oxen demonstration and viewing of
114 the Foodscape garden.

115 Mr. Broadwater will attend the next meeting on September 16th. Ms. Snyder will let Ms.
116 Kunelius know.

117 D. Agricultural Commission (Kathy)

118 Ms. Neff Ragsdale noted she reached out to the Chair of the Agriculture Commission
119 concerning their next meeting but hasn't had a response yet.

120 Mr. Broadwater noted Mr. Connelly is back.

121 E. Wason Pond Conservation & Recreation Commission (Kathy, Kristina)

122 Beavers – Ms. Snyder reported no issues with the beavers.

123 Parking – the Road Agent will be working on the community center lot soon.

124 Pavilion – WPC&RC met with Recreation and all are onboard with the design.

125 F. Trails (Aaron)

126 Mr. Hume discussed the trail maps and how those will be maintained if he is not able to
127 continue with that. Purchasing the GIS software was one possibility supported by the
128 Commission. Mr. Hume questioned if the present configuration was the best way to handle
129 trails that become private property. Selectman Myette recommended the maps were ready to
130 send to Town Counsel to be looked at. Mr. Hume will draft a letter and send it to the BOS office
131 for Mrs. Doda to submit to Town Counsel for review.

132 Mr. Hume noted he plans to survey more remote locations.

133 Mr. Broadwater detailed his volunteer work with Kingdom Trails in VT and how an outreach can
134 be effective. Mr. Broadwater agreed to help with an outreach to homeowners who have
135 property on Conservation's trail maps. Selectman Myette recommended a work session could
136 be had to clean up the maps if necessary.

137 Ms. Munson recommended *Trailfinder.info* for long-term storage of the trail maps.

138 Regulations

139 Grants

140 Easements, Monitoring & Stewardship

141 The Commission discussed using another third party for easement monitoring if RCCD won't
142 accept any new easements for monitoring.

PLAN REVIEWS

MISCELLANEOUS

Presentations (Kristina)

Ms. Snyder noted the next presentation would be on Fisher Cats and she will have flyers at the next meeting for the event to take place on Saturday, November 2nd at 1 PM.

For the Spring Ms. Snyder recommended doing an invasive species presentation.

Welcome New Member – Alternate Rick Sibley

Chair Chouinard welcomed Conservation's newest member, Rick Sibley, who was appointed as an alternate and has been sworn in.

Correspondence

Chair Chouinard noted there was a notification from NHDOT concerning the intersection improvement with potential for mitigation for disturbed wetlands areas to the South which protect the Exeter River. Chair Chouinard recommended Ms. Munson put together a list of potential mitigation and will send a copy to her of the notice.

Chair Chouinard noted a NHDES shoreland impact permit application was received for the Donnelly property at 21 Shepard Home Road.

Chair Chouinard noted a NHDES update was received from the Menard property on Lane Road for the culvert change from stone to concrete.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION 91-A:3(II)(d) consideration of the acquisition of real estate.

By Roll Call, Ms. Snyder motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(d) consideration of the acquisition of real estate. Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:56 PM.

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 9:40 PM.

Mr. Broadwater motioned to seal the minutes indefinitely. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Adjournment

Mr. Broadwater motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Munson seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer,
Recording Secretary