

WASON POND CONSERVATION & RECREATION COMMISSION

June 7, 2021

Approved Minutes

7:00 PM

Members present (remotely):

Chris Hadik, Chairman

Corinna Reishus

Sandy Wright

Kristina Snyder

Kathleen Neff Ragsdale

David Webster

Darrell Quinn, Alternate

John Dalrymple, Alternate

Members absent:

Chuck Myette, Selectmen's Liaison

1. Open Meeting – New Business

Chairman Hadik called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

a. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Neff Ragsdale reported expenses for the caretaker's cottage of \$55.53 in electricity usage and the bathhouse had \$16.21 in electricity usage for total expenditures of \$71.74. This leaves roughly 60.79% of the \$993.91 budget.

There is \$150 set aside in the budget for decommissioning utilities at Wason Pond. Ms. Neff Ragsdale asked if this is something the Commission still wants to consider. Chairman Hadik said the money is there to cover the cost of capping off the septic stub-ups that are sticking up above ground.

Ms. Reishus moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor. The motion passed.

b. Approval of Minutes – May 3, 2021

Ms. Neff Ragsdale moved to approve the May 3, 2021 minutes as written. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor except Mr. Quinn, who abstained. The motion passed.

c. Election of Officers

Ms. Neff Ragsdale commended Chairman Hadik on the job he has done in a difficult year and asked that he consider continuing as Chairman of the Commission.

Ms. Neff Ragsdale moved that Mr. Hadik continue as Chairman of the Commission. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor except Mr. Hadik, who abstained. The motion passed.

Ms. Neff Ragsdale moved that Ms. Reishus continue as Vice-Chairman of the Commission. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor except Ms. Reishus, who abstained. The motion passed.

Chairman Hadik moved that Ms. Neff Ragsdale continue as Treasurer of the Commission. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor except Ms. Neff Ragsdale, who abstained. The motion passed.

d. Horses swimming in pond? Policy agreed on last year.

The Commission discussed a policy last year that horses could swim in the pond, but not between Memorial Day and Labor Day, when the beach is being used. This is a safety issue. Ranger Wright said there have been no horse-related problems. The Chester horse owners agree they want to keep the property clean and follow the rules. One horse owner took a group of children along the trails and only found one pile of manure.

The Commission discussed whether dogs should be permitted on the small beach if horses are not permitted between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Mr. Quinn suggested finding another location for animals to swim that would not affect the people on the beaches. The Commission will try to find a suitable place for animals to swim and discuss this issue at the next meeting.

The Commission is concerned that there are already a lot of signs and would rather not post another one.

Ranger Wright will monitor dog use on the small beach for a month to see if there are any problems. Ms. Wright will add a notice to the horse owners Facebook page regarding animals not swimming on either beach between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Ms. Reishus will add the same request to the Town page.

e. Format of future meetings

Chairman Hadik said the emergency order expires on June 11th and it may not be renewed. The Board of Selectmen will discuss this at their next meeting and decide if meetings can be held in a hybrid fashion. The town offices and property are mask optional now. Chairman Hadik will notify the Commission of the format of the next meeting. Ms. Reishus said she can set up a hybrid meeting.

2. Selectmen's Liaison

a. Update

Selectman Myette was not in attendance, so there was no update.

3. Recreation Commission

a. Fishing Derby June 5th

Ms. Reishus reported that the fishing derby was very successful. Approximately 60 children participated, about half pre-registered. Attendance for the 12-15 age group was less than last year. Attendees were about 50 percent Chester residents and 50 percent from other towns.

b. Summer program

The summer program is being run July 6th through August 6th. They are looking for lifeguards (over age 16) or there will be no swimming.

c. Miscellaneous

Other groups are asking if Wason Pond is open to the public for their programs. Wason is open to the public, although there is a 50-person capacity for the beach. The Town Recreation Department has 60 kids in their program, so the property is at capacity. There is a way to take reservations, but hopefully this will not be necessary. The recommendation from Parks and Rec and Camps is not to hold field trips, but to keep them local if they do.

The water was tested last week and it passed. Another test will be done at the beginning of the Rec program. As a municipality-owned property, they are not required to test. Ms. Reishus will post the water results on the Town page.

There is a volunteer in town who has filled out an application to join the Commission. Ms. Reishus has invited him to the Rec Commission meeting and tonight's Wason Pond meeting.

Ms. Reishus will check the guidelines to see if the water bubbler can be opened.

Mr. Webster mentioned that Wason Pond is listed on the All Trails website and has received a 4-1/2 star rating.

4. Conservation Commission

a. Beaver update

Ms. Snyder and Mr. Chouinard dug out the dam, but the beavers have already replaced it. The cage needs to be cleaned and she hopes this can be done next week. The water is moving through the pipes, but debris that gathers around the cage needs to be kept clear.

b. Fishing line receptacles

Ms. Snyder reported that the receptacles are working very well. They are being filled with fishing line and hooks, and no trash. The fishing line will be taken to the Fish & Game Department to be recycled.

5. Ranger John Wright

a. Update

Mr. Wright was absent. Mrs. Wright said everything is going well and there haven't been too many issues. The fishing derby was successful and people said nice things about Wason Pond.

6. Master Plan – Projects

a. Pavilion

Selectman Myette was not in attendance, so there was no update.

7. Miscellaneous

a. Unleashed dogs

Chairman Hadik sent the Commission's request for a definition of "at large" to the Town Administrator, which has been submitted to the Town Counsel. They also asked if the leash law was enforceable. There has been no response.

b. Firemen's Muster in 2022

Chairman Hadik spoke with Mr. Costine. Mr. Costine will show Ms. Reishus where the poles will be erected. Chairman Hadik will suggest the dirt parking area as an alternative location, although they will lose 30 parking spots. Mr. Quinn suggested using an auger as opposed to a

backhoe to dig the holes.

c. Pedestrian traffic count (Madeleine Dilonno – July 2021)

Chairman Hadik reported that Ms. Dilonno is no longer with Southern New Hampshire Planning. He has contacted her replacement and he is willing to do a count in July. The Commission agreed that they would like to have one done.

d. ADA compliance ramp status

Selectman Myette was not present at the meeting to give a report. Ms. Reishus said the building inspector said the ramp does not need to be certified, but the pathway from the ramp to the parking area that needs to be compliant. The Senior Center is reopening, so it will be more difficult to do the construction.

e. Alex Brillhart Eagle Scout project

There was no update.

8. Miscellaneous

Ms. Reishus reminded the Commission that the funds remaining in the budget must be spent before the end of the fiscal year. The Commission discussed bringing in sand to the beach. As it is so late in the season, this should be put into the budget for 2023. They discussed purchasing picnic tables. Ms. Reishus will research the cost of new tables.

Ms. Neff Ragsdale moved that the Recreation Department be allowed to order new metal picnic tables at a cost of up to \$800 coming from the Wason Pond budget. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Adjournment and set date for next meeting (Monday, July 12, 2021)

Ms. Snyder moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 PM. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,
Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary**