

**Town of Monkton
Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 8th, 2019 6:00pm
Monkton Town Hall
(Approved September 11th, 2019)**

Members Present: Laura Farrell, Chelsea Smiley, Ian Smiley, Jaime Schulte, Ann Johnston Miller

Members On-Leave: Joe Roman

Members Absent: None

Guests: Kevin Lambert (Monkton resident), Laura Farrell (after the first agenda item), Kris Perlee (Monkton Zoning Administrator)

Laura called the meeting to order at 6:06. Jaime will be the minutes-taker.

- 1) **Update regarding Title 24, Chapter 118** – Vermont Conservation Commission Statute
 - a. Laura informed the committee that she and Joe Roman are resigning, effective immediately, from the Conservation Commission due to having recently moved to Richmond and no longer being Monkton residents. During a review of Title 24 Chapter 118 it was discovered that Conservation Commission members must be residents of the municipality.
- 2) **Elect officers:** Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, Treasurer
 - a. Ann nominated Chelsea for Chair. Ian seconded. All were in favor with Chelsea abstaining (3-0-1).
 - b. Chelsea nominated Jaime for Clerk. Ann seconded. All were in favor with Jaime abstaining (3-0-1).
 - c. Jaime nominated Ian for Treasurer. Ann seconded. All were in favor with Ian abstaining (3-0-1).
 - d. Title 24, Chapter 118 indicates that Conservation Commissions must annually elect a Chair, Treasurer, and Clerk. We will not create additional roles, such as Vice Chair, at this time.

Chelsea assumed the Chair role for the remainder of the meeting at this point.

- 3) **Approve minutes from July 11th, 2019**
 - a. Ian moved to approve the minutes from July 11th, 2019. Jaime seconded. Some discussion followed, but more time was needed. Jaime moved that we postpone approval of the July 11th minutes to our next meeting. Ian seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).
- 4) **Collaborations with related town committees and roles** (Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Town Forest Committee, Zoning Administrator)
 - a. Ian will reach out to the Planning Commission to see about getting on their agenda.
 - b. Jaime will reach out to the Development Review Board to see about getting on their agenda.
 - c. Kris Perlee, Monkton Zoning Administrator, joined us (at our request)
 - We discussed how the Conservation Commission might become more involved in the zoning and permitting process in an advisory capacity.
 - This role of a Conservation Commission is described in Vermont Statute [24 V.S.A. § 4464](#) and in [Title 24, Chapter 118](#).

- Kris provided some education on existing town processes and discussed how conservation commissions function in other towns.
 - Kris plans to copy the Conservation Commission on incoming applications for awareness. He also noted that many projects change substantially after the initial application, so it would be important to have a relationship with the Development Review Board to stay in contact with that process.
 - Kris then left the meeting at the conclusion of our discussion.
- d. The Brennan variance application was discussed. The variance was approved in July and a building permit has been issued. The project is an example of one where the Conservation Commission would likely take an interest and provide input into the permitting process in the future.

5) Updates

- a. Road Crew about parsnip mowing and cleaning equipment and using long reach to take out patches
 - Chelsea got in contact with the Road Foreman who was supportive and wants to know more for next season.
- b. Community day – August 24th
 - We are not planning a table/display for this year’s Community Day
- c. Reminder that Monica P will be presenting on forest blocks, hosted by the Planning Commission on Sept 3 at 7:30. Location is the Fire Station?
- d. The Town Forest Committee meets with Bob Heiser (of Vermont Land Trust) on Aug 22 at 6pm at the Fire Station.
- e. Raven Ridge (Ian and Chelsea)
 - Nothing new to report
- f. Recent Comments emails and new Applications (Ian and Chelsea)
 - Nothing new to report
- g. Most recent development on storage of permanent and temporary committee documents on the town website and on Google Drive (Jaime)
 - There are some questions to resolve on the best platform for workspace to produce draft documents and keep other committee resources.
 - It will be important to have clear policies in place consistent with Open Meeting Law regarding any use of a town cloud storage/collaboration area.
- h. Parsnip community volunteer ‘opportunities’ (Jaime)
 - Six volunteer sessions were held this summer to address parsnip in Morse Park and adjacent MCS grounds. We were able to clear about 70% of the park, including the most heavily used spaces near the soccer fields/pavilion and by the playground/ballfield. There was also an article run in the Addison Independent about the project.
- i. Pond Brook Field Guide status (Laura)
 - The guide is still in process and Laura has permission to print it at the town hall and will need to connect with the library about any additional publishing.

6) **Next meeting dates:** September 11th @ 6:00pm and October 9th @ 6:00pm

7) Other Business

- a. Kevin Lambert asked about the Conservation Commission’s Mission Statement. We do not yet have a written statement, but some initial discussion took place around it.
- b. Kevin expressed interest in joining the Conservation Commission and we encouraged him to apply to the Selectboard for appointment.

- c. Jaime spoke for the group in thanking Laura for her long service to the Monkton Conservation Commission and for reviving it this past winter. She offered to continue being a resource to the Commission, which is much appreciated.

Adjournment

Ian moved to adjourn. Jaime seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0). Adjourned at 8:03.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jaime Schulte
Clerk**