

**Town of Monkton  
Conservation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 6:00pm  
Monkton Town Hall  
(Approved October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019)**

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

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Kevin Lambert, Laura Farrell

Chelsea called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

**Regular Business**

- Review Agenda
- Set date/time for next meetings
  - October 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm
  - November 6<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm
- Approve Minutes
  - Minutes for 11th July 2019
    - Jaime moved to accept the minutes for 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Ian seconded. Minor edits were made in discussion. Jaime moved to accept the minutes for 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 as amended. Ian seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).
  - Minutes for 8th August 2019
    - Ian moved to accept the minutes for 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019. Ann seconded. No edits were made after review. All were in favor (4-0-0).

**Posting to the Website**

- Update on working space for committee files (Jaime):
  - Mark Boltz-Robinson is assisting the Selectboard (on a volunteer basis) to review the town's overall IT & security plans and infrastructure. The approach to document management will be included in that process. No timeline yet.

**Budget Request**

- Ian moved to approve a budget request of \$359.18 for Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) membership for Monkton and for Commission members to attend the AVCC summit on 9/28. Jaime seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).

**Adopt Rules/Procedures for the Conservation Commission**

- These rules/procedures reflect VT Statute on Open Meeting Law, Conservation Commissions, and our own additional rules/procedures.
- Ian moved to adopt the proposed rules/procedures. Ann seconded. Some minor edits were made in discussion. Ian moved to adopt the proposed rules/procedures as amended. Ann seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).
- Reviewed the proposed Conservation Commission Orientation Packet (for new members). Ian moved that the Conservation Commission adopt the Orientation Packet. Jaime seconded. The document was reviewed, but no changes were made. All were in favor (4-0-0). Ian will post the Packet to our section of the town website.

### **Conservation Commission Goals**

- Discussed Commission member interests and goals – what do we want to focus on within the broad scope of responsibilities for a Conservation Commission, as defined by VT Statute? The discussion reflected the following interests:
  - **Education & Engagement**
    - Monkton’s population is expanding, and the Commission can facilitate community engagement/education to balance growth with conservation considerations. We would like to understand what Monkton residents want the town to be like in 20 years. More developed like Hinesburg or Bristol? Same as it is now?
    - Community engagement & education on managing invasive species.
  - **Advocating for ecological and wildlife needs**
    - Need to represent environmental perspectives and needs in town life and decision-making.
    - Collaboration with other town committees (DRB, Planning, ANAC, Recreation, etc.) to support their work while representing conservation considerations.
  - **Inventory and study of Monkton’s natural resources**
    - Gathering and sharing inventory/information.
  - **Stewardship**
    - Stewardship of some town properties (such as the Pond Brook Management Area or perhaps a future Town Forest)

### **Pond Brook Management Plan review**

- Reviewed a portion of the Management Plan and then postponed the remainder of the review.

### **Updates**

- Contact with DRB
  - Ian moved that Chelsea and Jaime represent the Commission at an upcoming meeting of the DRB. Ann seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0).
    - Would plan to cover our role, learn more about their role, and discuss how we can support each other’s work.
- Planning Commission update
  - There will be an upcoming hearing on the Town Plan for public comment. After that we will look to have input on the Unified Planning Document revision.
- Town Forest Committee meeting (22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019)
  - Bob Heiser of VLT visited and presented on what other towns have done to fund, establish, and manage town forests. The meeting was attended by members of the Conservation Commission and ANAC participating as residents.
- Planning Commission meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019)
  - Monica Przyperhart from Fish & Wildlife presented on forest blocks and habitat connectivity, in general and specific to Monkton. The PC was receptive and engaged in the topic but discussed afterward that there may not be time to include the new information in the current Town Plan. There is already relevant language in the Plan about forest blocks and connectivity and how PUDs can help with fragmentation.
- Agency of Natural Resources Bulletin
  - No additional notices/permits mentioned on the website for Monkton.
- Morse Park

- Morse Park was mowed in mid-August, which is unfortunate timing for parsnip and pollinators (especially monarch butterflies). The northern half of the park was mowed first, which should help with the spread of parsnip seeds. The stream area was not mowed, so there continues to be a buffer along both sides of it. We should work with the Rec Committee to postpone mowing in future years until October, even if there is a cost involved (vs. volunteer mowing). Ann will look into what it would cost to brush hog the approximately 14 to 15 acres that have normally been mowed in the park, to see if that idea is feasible.
  - Suggestion was made to do some education/signage on why we would postpone mowing until late season (Bobolinks, Monarchs). Perhaps a Four Winds project. We have time to plan before next season and will take this up again at a future meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Jaime moved to adjourn. Ian seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0). Adjourned at 7:57pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Jaime Schulte**  
**Clerk**