

Tuesday, October 4th, 2022 - Leverett Conservation Commission meeting FINAL minutes

In Attendance:

David Powicki, Chair

Joan Deely, Voting member

Ralph Tiner, Voting member

Seth Heminway, Voting member and member of Rattlesnake Gutter Trust

Julia Firl, Voting member

Adam Kohl, Conservation Agent

Steve Weiss, Rattlesnake Gutter Trust board member

Dan Williams, Co-chair Rattlesnake Gutter Trust

Carol Heim, Citizen of Leverett

Hillary Ferro, 350 Shutesbury Rd.

Rich Ferro, 350 Shutesbury Rd.

Meeting started: David starts meeting at 7:00pm

1) Discussion on a strategy for stabilizing Rattlesnake Gutter Rd

Seth says Rattlesnake Gutter Trust (RGT) has reached out to the selectboard and town counsel concerning the need for repairs on Rattlesnake Gutter Road. Maintenance hasn't been done on the road for several years. There has been a lot of turnover in the Highway Dept. and this maintenance has reportedly fallen through the cracks. The Highway Department has said Spring would be a good time to work on the road, though some things could be done this Fall. Work would include clearing of troughs on the sides of the road which are backed up with leaves and other debris causing washouts on the road. Large and medium sized trees are growing up along the road as well, adds Steve Weiss. RGT has applied for a CPA grant for long term preservation work on the road. Seth is eventually hoping for a written endorsement from the Con Com saying the RGT proposal is sound. The road is designated as a 'county road' and FRCOG may need to be added to the conversation. RGT is looking for support of the initial grant proposal to survey the road and the Con Com would be apprised of any findings in the survey. Dan will draft a letter for the Con Com's approval at the next meeting. Adam will review the drafted letter ahead of the next meeting.

2) Minutes and Mail

Ralph makes a motion to accept Aug. min as they are written, Joan Seconds, All in favor.

Edits to Sept. min are discussed: Adam should add David's resignation in Items Not Yet Anticipated section. Joan makes a motion to accept the Sept. meeting minutes with changes above, Ralph seconds, all in favor.

3) Selection of a new Conservation Commission Chair

A new chair was not decided at this meeting. A new chair will need to be decided at the November meeting which will be David's last meeting as Chair and a commission member.

Items not anticipated within 48 hours

Carol Heim asks questions about the commission's statement on Leverett Pond herbicide usage which was posted to the Leverett town website. She is concerned that the commission may have more authority to prevent herbicide use at Leverett Pond than the statement had indicated. The commission mentions that Leverett Pond is considered a "Great Pond" and therefore property of the Commonwealth, and the commission can not regulate herbicide use there. The commission agreed to send Carol the documents this statement is based on.

When Adam accepted the job as Conservation Agent in April of 2022, during a phone conversation with Isaiah Robison (who was Chair of the commission at the time), Isaiah noted Adam would be due for a 6-month review, in which if his work as Agent was adequate, Adam would be considered for a \$2/hr raise (from \$23/hr to \$25/hr). Adam notes the position was originally advertised between \$20-\$30/hr. David makes a motion that we increase Adam's salary to \$25/hr effective October 1st, Ralph seconds, all in favor.

Hillary and Rich Ferro of 350 Shutesbury Rd entered the meeting and requested information from the commission on how best to proceed with a project involving utility pole installation on their property. Hillary and Rich mention that National Grid had requested proof of the commission's sign-off on the project. Adam stated that the project may be exempt under 310 CMR: 10.02(2)(b)(1)(h). Adam said that the commission can not supply National Grid with a letter without having officially reviewed the project under an RDA or NOI filing. Rich and Hillary will check with National Grid to let them know they believe the project is exempt from filing. If National Grid would like an official statement from the commission Hillary and Rich will need to file an RDA with the commission.

Next meeting is set for: November 7th at 7pm, via Zoom

Motion to close the meeting: Julia makes a motion to adjourn, Ralph seconds. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 7:47pm

Minutes taken by Adam Kohl - Conservation Agent – Approved by Commission 11/7/22