

## **Leverett Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes: May 5, 2025**

Start Time: 7:00 PM

Board attendance: Joan Deely, Acting Chair; Seth Heminway, David Powicki, Julia Firl, Sarah Manteiga, voting members

### **In Person**

Mitch Mulholland, FLP

Eva Gibavic, Liz Etheridge, RGT

Pete Sylvan, BOH (not present for entire meeting)

**PUBLIC INQUIRIES:** none

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Plan alteration for hydroraking of cattails in Leverett Pond: Board needs to discuss cattail removal by hydroraking as a minor change to approved footprint in existing FLP OOC (DEP #200-0196) rather than as a new RDA, to fix procedural error from April meeting. Mitch Mulholland presents letter retracting RDA. David moves to approve the removal of 200 additional feet of cattails via hydrorake as minor plan change to OOC. Seth seconds. The motion passes unanimously. The motion will be recorded in the minutes, which along with the RDA retraction letter will be added to the FLP file and sent to Mitch for his records.

## **NEW & OLD BUSINESS**

CR maintenance: Liz Etheridge and Eva Gibavic describe some best management practices for CR maintenance, focusing on the four ConCom-owned properties held (managed) by Rattlesnake Gutter Trust. There is a management updates form that RGT completes annually, preceded by a walkthrough with a ConCom member to observe the state of the land. ConCom and RGT each keep a copy of the form, and one copy is sent to the Field Museum. RGT is tasked with informing the ConCom if there is tree cutting or sign of other disturbances on their CRs.

Eva notes that the Friendship Trails are made up of three parcels under one CR.

They discuss boundary markings. Seth stresses the importance of clear markings to the maintenance of the land and for clarity of boundaries to the public, for logistical and legal purposes. Eva says it hasn't been clearly stated in the past whether RGT or ConCom are responsible for maintaining boundary markings, but that she believes it is ConCom's job. Joan asks how boundaries are located, and Eva says there are GPS points for all boundaries and the known pins. Seth says the blazes are to be aluminum with the image they have used in the past, and that paint to mark trees for blazes should be a blue that also matches past use. Seth says he will begin repainting for blaze placement when he's out in the field. They authorize Bella to order 500-1000 blazes for boundary marking.

They agree that ConCom should adopt the best practices recommended by RGT, and that Kestrel Land Trust probably has CR monitoring recommendations as well.

Eva notes that it may be desirable to develop a relationship with Native Land Conservancy to be able to use trails on the Nepesoneag land at 65 Montague Rd.

David suggests we go through inventory of ConCom-owned properties at the next meeting. Eva has excel sheet of CR properties.

It is mentioned that ConCom may need to sign off on a Kestrel report for a certain CR, as well as the Whitney Marvel property. Bella will follow up and add to June agenda.

42 Shutesbury Rd flow control device installation: Pete Sylvan of BOH stops by the meeting to inquire about the status of the beaver pond at 42 Shutesbury Rd. Bella updates him and the board that the well at 42 Shutesbury has flooded, rendering the landowner's water non-potable, and of the need for BOH sign-off on a forthcoming emergency permit request so that Beaver Solutions can install flow control device on Friday, May 9. The landowner or his daughter will sign the form to grant permission. Bella will then send all relevant paperwork to MSPCA to acquire as much grant funding as possible to cover costs of installation.

Hicks/Botta land donation: Seth mentions (after Eva and Liz Etheridge no longer present) that Commission could discuss RGT holding CR for land donation. They discuss the removal of sheds on the property and the possibility of there being lead or asbestos that could contaminate the land during demolition. They also discuss how much of the acquisition costs should be covered by ConCom vs the landowners. This item should be left on the agenda for discussion at future meetings and revisited with landowners when they are back in town in early fall.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

Approval of Minutes: 4/21/25

They discuss the minutes and need clarification from Mitch Mulholland about when vegetation surveys will be conducted around Leverett Pond (before hydorraking, after, or both?)

Julia makes a motion to approve the minutes conditionally with clarification from Mitch. Sarah seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

Allocation of funds for MACC trainings: discussed as a good idea for Sarah, Bill, Bella

Julia steps down: Julia Firl announces that this will be her last meeting for the foreseeable future. The Commission thanks her for her great work.

Executive Session: ES is not formally entered, but Commission discusses need to find dates for mediation that David can attend. Joan will write to Margie to this effect.

## **MEETING WRAP-UP**

Known agenda items for June meeting: CRs (discuss priorities with list), Kestrel & Whitney Marvel property

Next meeting date: Monday, Jun 2, 2025

Joan makes a motion to adjourn. David seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:15pm.

Submitted by: Bella Yeager

Approved on: 6/2/25