

# 5/9/18 Somersworth Conservation Commission Meeting

## City Council Chambers

### Attendees

Scott Orzechowski- Chair

Angela Ficco – Regular Member

Sarah McGraw- Treasurer

### City Staff/Others Present

Shanna Saunders – Planning Director

The meeting was called to order at 7:12pm by chairman Scott Orzechowski.

#### 1. Approval of meeting minutes from April 11, 2018

The minutes were not available to Conservation Commission members due to being in review by the Planning Department after Angela Ficco inquired about not being posted. Scott Orzechowski noted that none of the minutes from 2018 have been posted online. Shanna Saunders stated that draft minutes should be publicly posted 48 hours after submission. Shanna said she would look into the previous minutes.

#### 2. Old Business: None

#### 3. New Business

- a. Scott Orzechowski reported that the Sustainability Committee is pursuing supporting offshore wind development by having the City put forth a letter in support of a state taskforce to study offshore wind in NH along with the other NH communities who have already signed on.
- b. Member Items and Reports : None
- c. Treasurers report: Sarah McGraw stated that the last report was \$92,113.37 with \$35, 555 to be transferred into the account. Sarah will look into receiving a monthly report from the finance office. Scott Orzechowski asked if any interest accrued from this account. Shanna Saunders said she would inquire.

Sarah also mentioned that the Somersworth Community Garden is well underway having their annual garden plot signups which has been improving year to year. Plots are still available if anyone is interested.

#### 4. Workshop Business

Amanda Stone, Natural Resources & Land Conservation Specialist with the UNH Cooperative Extension met with the Conservation Commission to discuss the practical workings of conservation planning. Maps from the Natural Resource Assessment and Co-Occurrence Mapping document were enlarged so that the Conservation Commission could look at and discuss how to concentrate conservation efforts. Scott Orzechowski noted that some topics of concern were drinking water and habitats where endangered species may live.

Amanda Stone provided ideas to help increase public support and input for conservation planning. Some communities have placed maps of the town/city at public events/polling places for the community to report sightings of wildlife in the community. Amanda Stone said she would send along more maps for this type of exercise. One copy could be kept at City Hall and one could be used for City Events. According to the co-occurrence maps there are seven focus areas for conservation. The Sunningdale development is the newest area of conservation that needs to be added to the maps.

Amanda Stone also brought up the newest source of funding for the NHDES Drinking Water and Ground Water Trust Fund. Shanna Saunders said she had been looking into this. The fund would supply funding for conserving land near sources of drinking water, such as the secondary water supply for the City on Rocky Hill Road. After the Conservation Commission pointed out this resource, Amanda Stone noted how important it was to protect this source of drinking water for the City.

Amanda Stone noted that other sources of funding for conservation were LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program), the Moose Plate Grants and the ARM (Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund).

It was discussed that the Conservation Commission may wish to present co-occurrence areas to City Council again as a reminder of what is important to conserve. Sending letters to property owners of the potential habitat values may be a good way to start talking to land owners about conservation.

#### Other Business:

On April 13, Scott Orzechowski and Dale Smith-Kenyon met to look over the Dover-Somersworth wetlands permit to connect water supplies. Scott noted that he was not aware this meeting was the final comment from the Conservation Commission for the wetlands permit. It was noted that according to the Heritage Bureau, Long Eared Bats, Northern Blazing Star, and Whirled Begonia's may be present in this area.

There was some discussion about the social media policy. Shanna Saunders said that City Staff need to create a social media policy before boards can have a social media page.

Angela Ficco motioned to adjourn, second by Sarah McGraw, VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Sarah McGraw