

Freedom Conservation Commission

Tuesday, 17 October, 2023

7:00 pm at the Freedom Town Hall

Quorum Check, Roll Call – The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Jeff Nicoll.

Present are: Jeff Nicoll, R.A. Oram, Linda Mailhot, Paul Elie (7:08 pm), Sue Hoople, Alice Custard. Michele Keenan is absent.

Ned Kucera is also in attendance.

Approval of September 19, 2023 FCC Meeting Minutes – Alice made a motion to approve, Sue seconded. APPROVED

Review of FAC Meeting Minutes October 4, 2023 - done

Water Testing 2024 Discussion -Loon Lake, Round Pond, Trout Pond and regular testing. Loon Lake sent a contribution of \$400 toward the testing. Budgeting will begin next month. Test results can be shared with Helen (in response to her email). PFAS testing was discussed. Investigate PFAS testing and explore costs for next month. Ned forwarded the email from Helen to Jill at Green Mountain, who wrote an explanatory return to her. Jeff will check with Jill to make sure everyone is all set with this. Round Pond bladderwort was brought up.

Timber Harvest Project and Communication Plan Discussion – the Select Board has signed the contract, and Barry has signed it as well. Need communication with the townspeople before the harvesting starts. How will this be done? Website, community bulletin board, School notice, Camp Cody. Notice banner on the home page linking to FCC page. What are we doing in the forest, why? Signs to indicate where it is happening on the trails. Work on draft communications prior to the harvesting. Email communications with Barry were discussed. He is waiting for the BOS to answer him, but the FCC has already given him the answer, so we will remind him of that.

FCC / Town Forest Preliminary Budget discussion – Land Use Change tax account and Town Forest Maintenance fund were discussed at last meeting. Why is the Land Use Change Account not increasing every year? Stacy explained that it is there, but it is in some interfund account, the auditor felt that this was not a transparent way of accounting. This continues to be investigated. \$32562.00 is currently accurate, but why it does not show as having increased remains a mystery.

FCC Meeting Dates for 2024 – distributed. Oram would like the application deadlines from the FCC listed on the Meeting Date list. Linda suggests changing the deadline to more than a week before. The deadline coincides with the deadlines for the ZBA.

Cold Brook Culvert / Wildlife crossing Discussion – Jeff researched this. DES considers this a cold water fisheries zone. Brook trout migrate from Ossipee Lake up through that

crossing. There are significant resources the State can help us with. Alice recommended keeping in touch with Green Mountain about this, with regard to their Trout in the Classroom program. Use this as communication on the website about a special project.

FCC website discussion – last time we talked about coming up with a mission statement. Linda will compose a draft for the next meeting. Jeff will design a draft home page with logo, mission etc. Oram suggests photos of the members. There is concern that it will become outdated as members change if there are pictures of the members on the website.

Approval of Invoices – Oram asked where Barry stands in the annual budget. Last month we had \$3005 left. Follow up to ask what the grant is, is there anything we can do to support this? Please share a copy of the grant that was written.

Alice made a motion to approve the 3 invoices for BH Keith, Oram seconded. AP-PROVED

Update Barry with the remaining balance in the budget.

Other business to come before the commission –

1. We sent a letter to Barry asking about the die off from the Brown Tail Moths. Jeff read his response to the Commission. Discussion was held regarding the response. Additional joint meetings are recommended.
2. Jeff attended the BOS meeting last night. One item was about the Round Pond resident that is concerned about the weeds. Can we provide guidance to the Select Board regarding the herbicides he is using? The homeowner also wants to dredge. The Select Board has asked us to inform them so this can be wrapped up. Herbicide application is not allowed. A dredge and fill permit would be required to dredge. This is a natural procedure that is happening, as this is a shallow manmade pond. Selectman Day would like this response in writing, and he also asked if we could find out how much it would be to dredge. The FCC is not going to provide information about dredging. Send the questions to DES and forward that response to the Select Board.
3. There is a septic system in failure on Scarboro Road. There is a likelihood that it is going into Bennett Brook and Loon Lake. The Selectboard has asked that we follow up with the State. Our concern is with Bennett Brook and Loon Lake. Alice made a motion to email DES regarding FCC concern over failed septic system in proximity of Bennett Brook and Loon Lake, as well as the public water supply. Oram seconded. APPROVED

Oram - RSA 36:a gives us the authority for subcommittees. Section 31 says that the FAC can be a stand-alone committee. Suggested that they consider being a stand-alone committee. The stewardship plan indicates that they fall under the FCC. This can be changed. Petition can make the FAC a stand-alone committee. Discussion was held regarding this option. Some members of the Board are in support of remaining as we are, with FAC as a subcommittee. A joint meeting with the FAC for next month is discussed. Have an FAC rep at FCC meeting as listed in the Rules of Procedure was talked about. General consensus is to have discussions at joint meeting next month.

Land use books for 2023/24?

How much do we pay to LRPC? Is it pro-rated? We need updated wetlands maps, etc. Paul will be meeting with David Jeffers to get some information.

Public Comment

Adjourn – Sue made a motion to adjourn at 9:35 pm, Alice seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Donaldson
Recording Secretary