

Wentworth Conservation Commission (WCC)

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting

September 6, 2022

Place: Wentworth Town Office
Time: 10:05
Present: Linda Brownson, Chair
Tuula Pihlajavesi, Vice Chair
Ilse “Izzy” Mercier, Secretary
Birgitte “Deda” Wilms, Member
Arnold Scheller, Select Board Ex-Officio.

Chair L. Brownson called the meeting to order at 10:05.

1. Agenda Review
2. Minutes of the August 2, 2022 minutes were approved by I. Mercier and seconded by D. Wilms with the following corrections.
I Mercier (not I Scheller) seconded the minutes of July 5, 2022.
70 (not 100) bales of hay were donated by T. Pihlajavesi.
3. Discussion of trail network proposals from Alex DeLucia and Jordan King are on hold. Both are being revised to reflect changes in information they received from WCC.
A. Scheller verified that volunteers are covered working on a town project.
There was discussion on the importance of documenting volunteer time and photos of project progression so WCC can express appreciation and keep the townspeople informed. The information can also be used when applying for grants.

4. Field trip to Town Forest Dorchester parcel.

A field trip was done on 9/9/22. The parcel is at the intersection of North Dorchester Road and the Rowentown Cross Road. It was obtained through back taxes owed. The goal will be to facilitate a quick sale at market value. The Town needs to obtain a recorded deed of ownership. D Wilms suggested a perc test and driveway permit would add interest to the sale. Selling the parcel will return it to tax income for the town. L. Brownson will present to the Select Board 9/20/22 this information and request permission to market the parcel as a way to fund the work proposed on the Town Forest and the conservation easement application.

5. Field trip to Turner/Buffalo Road parcel on 9/9/22.

L. Brownson I. Mercier, D. Wilms and T. Pihlajavesi were present. It has been pointed out by Lisa Doner (Baker River Watershed Association) that it is an important parcel as a large stratified-drift aquifer runs under it.

6. Baker River Watershed Association and WCC participation.

L. Brownson met with Lisa Doner on 9/5/22 at the Turner/ Buffalo Road parcel of the Town Forest. Doner is a research professor with the Center for the Environment at PSU and an officer with the Baker River Watershed Association. There was discussion of the recent Baker River water samplings with high counts at Hamilton Field and Saunders Hill Road. L. Doner would like to see the WCC take over the testing of the sites. A new site, preferably between Warren and Wentworth, would be beneficial and A. Scheller stated the Town has a gravel pit on the east side of Rt 25 north of town where the river could be accessed. He also explained the process of identifying a source of contamination with the help of the Health Officer and Police. It was agreed by all that the WCC would be responsible for the testing in May through September 2023.

7. Pemi-Baker Land Trust

Discussion took place on how to fund the Conservation Commission, including our application for an easement with the Pemi-Baker Land Trust, with proceeds from land removed from current land use fees, known as the

Land Use Change Tax. A review of previous by laws and research on amount of that tax received since 2016 for land removed from current land use will be done.

8. Observations in nature.

There have been sightings of bear and a cub, a two year old bear, turkeys and deer. Of note, is that bear baiting season starts 9/1/2022.

9. Other business

Conservation questions on the 2021 Wentworth Master Plan Community Survey were discussed. It was agreed educating the community of the WCC goals and activities was important. Facebook and a display board with photos, bios of the community members and a narrative of activities could be used at local events for education and exposure.

10. Comments or questions from meeting visitors – none.

11. Meeting adjourned at 11:43

Minutes submitted 9/20/22 by Ilse “Izzy” Mercier , Secretary.