

ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

February 16, 2021

Present: Phine Ewing (Chair), Clarke Cooper, Susan Fenn, Noreen Blaiklock, Jesse McMahan, Paul Schlein, Karen Dowell, Karen Robbins, Jonathan La Bonte (Maine Tree Foundation-Holt Forest)

1. The virtual meeting was called to order at 5:03PM
2. The minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting were unanimously accepted as amended.
3. Mail: No new mail.
4. Project Canopy: Jonathan reports that Jack Witham and Maine Tree are submitting a grant proposal to Project Canopy for planning educational outreach, setting research priorities and creating community and scientific advisory committees at the Holt Forest. He noted that the strongest applicants are those that partner with municipalities. The ACC noted that Jack is a respected professional and member of the community and if he is leading the project it sounded worthwhile. Jonathan asked if ACC would be willing to write a letter of support. He didn't identify any specific tasks required of ACC at this time. The application deadline is March 12, 2021. The ACC asked Jonathan to get the grant information to Phine and she would draft a letter of support and send it around; Paul found and sent the RFP for Project Canopy to each member during the meeting.
5. Sewall Pond Conservation Area Management Plan (SPCAMP): Jonathan reported that before the logger left the job site a sufficient amount of chips were stock-piled and available to the ACC for erosion control and trail maintenance. There will be four 50 m X 50m deer exclosures on the Holt property so it was decided that having additional ones on SPCA land was unnecessary. It was noted that Jack will be giving a virtual talk for KELT on March 4th regarding the Holt Forest small mammal study. The draft parking ordinance was discussed. ACC is considering offering it to the Select Board as a first draft so that the Select Board can move forward with the ordinance if they so choose. Jonathan reminded us that parking ordinances are civil actions so don't require a sheriff to enforce only a person or persons designated by the Select Board or ordinance. Many ideas and concerns were shared including but not limited to: the draft could be a useful starting point for the Select Board, an ordinance could be a useful tool for the Select Board to control usage of the Conservation Area, there continues to be concern about the method and consistency of enforcement, it was note that the enabling ordinance for the ACC doesn't provide for any ACC enforcing authority and it was also noted that current Commissioners didn't feel they personally have the agency to enforce ordinances. No action was taken at this meeting. The topic will be revisited at the next meeting and members were asked to give thoughtful consideration to the proposal over the coming month.
6. Arrow Article: Phine will send the article and alewife vignette when the call for submissions goes out. She is anticipating it will be in the next few days.

7. SPCAMP Redux: Signage was discussed. Members still need to walk the property and will walk it the beginning of March when the ground conditions are more hospitable. Where directional and interpretative signs will be placed and the specific language will be determined at that time. ACC has decided to use less permanent signage methods such as laminated cardboard on plywood sign backs. This will allow for the temporary nature of “revegetation signage”, seasonal changes in interpretive experiences and changing management needs. Charlie Hudson has offered to laminate the signs.
8. Efficiency Maine Grants: Efficiency Maine has announced various programs for municipalities. Phine will pass the information on to the Properties Management Committee.
9. Comprehensive Plan: The Select Board is looking for an individual to do background planning for a Comprehensive Planning process. ACC reviewed the process that was used for the existing 1989 Plan, specifically how various departments and the public provided input to the Plan. The ACC supports the idea of redoing the existing plan and is interested in fully participating in the process. Phine will send a letter to that effect to the Select Board.
10. Nature Notes: Clarke has had a bufflehead in his cove and noted that historically there are common golden eyes there also. Susan had lots of robins show up this week and reports they really enjoy the blueberries she froze from last summer’s harvest. She has also noticed them breaking through the ice encrusted winterberries. Paul has noted a dearth of birds at his feeders even though there is plenty of food. He has seen a few nuthatches, chickadees, blue jays and a cardinal. Phine has seen a lot of porcupine tracks on the IF & W land near the duck camps and wonders if they have been displaced by the logging operations on the Holt property this winter. Clarke and Karen D. reported seeing coyote scatological deposits. Paul made an audio recording of coyotes this past month and will share it at the next meeting.
11. The meeting adjourned unanimously at 6:22 PM.
12. The next meeting will be March 16, 2021 at 5 PM. Meetings will be conducted virtually until physical distancing recommendations are lifted.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robbins, Acting Secretary