

Chair Sam Demeritt opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Other members in attendance were Cheryl Smith, Debra Kimball, Susan Mooney, and Johan Kerkhove, Alternate, who was seated for Mary Colvard.

The **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

**Announcements:** The Budget Committee will be reviewing the proposed 2024 budgets from town agencies on Thursday, 11-16-23 at 7 PM, including the Conservation Commission's. Town budgets are regulated by a cap of 4% increase from the previous year's budget.

**Conservation Easement Monitoring:** The Town is responsible for the annual monitoring of properties that have conservation easement deeds placed on the parcels. In general, such properties have extinguished any future subdivision and mining but activities are still permitted such as silviculture, agriculture, passive recreation, and the like, if written into the easement deed. In this way, open spaces protect our town's rural character and natural resources such as water and wildlife habitat thus balancing new housing and infrastructures such as roadways and services. The Conservation Commission assumes the annual monitoring on behalf of the town. Properties that have easement deeds held by the Town of Nottingham are the Terninko 108-acre parcel on Case Road, the 58.5-acre Friend Family parcel on Raymond Road, Mendum's Landing Association's two parcels totaling 34.65+ acres along Old Turnpike Road, and the 21-acre Kimball Family Forest along Freeman Hall Road.

Leads for monitoring are Kimball for Friend Family Forest and Mooney for the Mendums Landing Association parcels.

Demeritt will check with Dallas Huggins and Tom Eid to see if they would assume the monitoring of the Terninko property.

No one has taken the lead to monitor the Kimball piece.

D. Kimball reported that she and Owen Friend-Gray walked the Friend parcel on November 5, concentrating on the boundary to the east and south. The north side is not walkable due to increased beaver activity resulting in flooding in that area; all was in order. The parcel does not have a stewardship plan as yet. Kimball will submit the monitoring report to the Business Office.

**Highway Cleanup:** The next roadside cleanup of one mile each of Routes 156 and 152 is scheduled for November 30, starting at 8:30 AM. Anticipated Commission participants will be Demeritt, Mooney and Kimball.

**Trails Committee:** There are single large trees fallen across the trails at Marsh Woods and Kennard Forest.

It is recommended that an additional trailhead sign be provided for hikers coming from the mill site to direct them as they emerge from the mill loop trail onto the main trail.

Reimbursement for the expenditure of the large trail map made by Portsmouth Sign Company for Marsh Woods kiosk is due. It was moved by Smith and seconded by Mooney to reimburse Kimball \$200 for this purchase. All five (5) votes were in favor.

**Bear-Paw Regional Greenways:** There is no progress to report on the Hume easement project.

**NH Association of Conservation Commissions Annual Meeting:** Demeritt and Mooney attended this event, which was held at Pembroke Academy on Saturday, November 4. The keynote speaker was the renowned David Carroll, a native turtle expert and spokesperson for their protection. He is the author of several books about this oldest group of reptiles found in our area.

Demeritt and Mooney each attended three workshops; these included saving special places in Kingston and Stoddard, invasive species, the health issues associated with climate change presented by the NH Health Care Workers, and local and global adaptations including planning for climate change.

**Correspondence:** There was none.

**Minutes:** The meeting minutes of August 21, 2023 were reviewed and edited. It was moved by Kerkhove and seconded by Mooney to accept these minutes as edited. All five (5) votes were in favor.

The meeting minutes of October 30, 2023 were reviewed and edited. It was moved by Kerkhove and seconded by Kimball to accept these minutes as edited. All five (5) votes were in favor.

**Winter Walk:** A Winter Wildlife Walk hosted by the Commission and the Trails Committee will be held on the Terninko easement property on February 24, 2024. The inclement weather date will be March 2.

**Adjournment:** It was moved by Kerkhove and seconded by Smith to adjourn the meeting. All five (5) votes were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Mooney, Secretary

These minutes were accepted as corrected at the meeting held on December 11, 2023.