Bethlehem Conservation Commission

January 27, 2022

6pm

Library

**Draft Minutes**

Present: Cheryl Jensen, Lindsay Webb, Margaret Gale, Vivian Winterhoff, Nicole McGrath, Liaison Veronica Morris.

Absent: Alternate Marilyn Johnson

Guest: Barry Zitser, Andre Aoun

Lindsay called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

Public Comment:

Barry told the BCC that the Transfer Station Committee has adopted a resolution in support of the bills on tonight's agenda. A copy to the resolution will be given to the BCC and a copy has been sent to the Selectboard.

Rep Tim Egan Presentation Summary (Dec 14)

The BCC reviewed the bills that were presented by Representative Tim Egan on December 14th. HB 1571 will increase fines for littering on state highways and in state parks. HB 1652 is a bottle bill, HB 1406 authorizes municipalities to collect compost, HB 1122 authorities municipalities to collect and resell construction and demolition debris. HB 1471 would eliminate single use plastic bags statewide. HB 1119 would allow towns to regulate the use of paper and plastic bags. Cheryl drafted letters to the appropriate committees and a memo to the Selectboard asking them to support the bills. She also drafted letters for the selectboard to send to the committees in support of the bills. Cheryl moved that the BCC vote to support the following NH House bills: HB 1571, 1652, 1406, 1122, and 1471/1119 as summarized. Nicole seconded, motion passed 5-0.

Cheryl motioned that the BCC vote to approve six letters, one in support of each of these bills as a Conservation Commission. The letters would be sent from the CC to committees and legislators at the appropriate times. Lindsay seconded the motion. There was discussion on adding to the letter for HB 1406 about how composting improves the soil and leads to better health when used for farming. There was also support for HB 1122. Motion passed 5-0.

Cheryl moved the CC vote to send the memo dated Jan. 28 to the Selectboard, this memo asks the selectboard to support these bills and to send letters of support to the state legislator and committees at the appropriate times, Margaret seconded. There were some minor corrections made to the memo. Motion passed 5-0. Memo approved with corrections.

Cheryl moved that the BCC vote to approve the drafts of six letters that would be sent to the SB in support of these bills. The selectboard can use these drafts to send to state legislators and committees at the appropriate times. Vivian seconded. Barry and Margaret suggested some minor edits. Motion passed 5-0. Letters approved with minor corrections.

Cheryl moved to give the Chair the authority to send letters to the Editor in support of these bills as necessary without needing to hold a meeting, since we have already approved the content. Margaret seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The BCC reviewed some Statistics from the Conservation Law Foundation, 75% of the 1.4 billion beverage bottles and cans were “wasted” which means littered, landfilled or incinerated, according to the Container Recycling Institute. It also estimates that the state could reap as much as $14 million in unclaimed deposit revenue annually.

Anti-Littering Discussion

Anti-Littering Signs: Cheryl reached out to the NH State Prison to get information about the signs that they make. She also reached out to DOT but did not hear back from anyone. Veronica said that the Selectboard is currently in discussion with DOT about signs and they can ask about this. Different people will need to be contacted to get permission depending on the location. Highway department, Rec Director, Selectboard, etc. For the next meeting the members should brainstorm suggested locations for signage that is within the Towns control. Margaret suggested signs that say “Keep Bethlehem Clean and Green, please don’t litter”.

Social Media Campaign: Lindsay put together a couple of posts to put on Facebook as an anti littering campaign. She drafted a post for each month to share on facebook. Andre suggested reaching out to local businesses to see if they can get local businesses to share our post so that we can reach more people. Lindsay can reach out to local businesses and encourage them to like and share our page. Discussion on the facebook page and posting support of the house bills and also sharing about the NH Coverts Project

Adopt a Spot: Merrimack NH has an adopt a spot program. The program asks that people commit to clean it up twice a year and track how much garbage is picked up, what type of garbage, anything hazardous. They supply the garbage bags. Sign up, safety instructions, bags and safety vests are provided. They have signs that say who has adopted the spot. The cost is about $100 for the signs. Adopt a spot can be used as a way to advertise for businesses. Could advertise the adopt a spot program during the roadside clean up.

Discussion on keep NH beautiful bags. There were some members who do not want to use NH the Beautiful bags because of their involvement with the NH Grocers Association and them fighting against bills that would reduce single use plastic and implement a bottle bill.

2022 Roadside Clean-up:

The BCC discussed ordering t-shirts for the roadside clean up. Barry suggested Just Be Litter Free, on a bright safety green with navy type. Pam Sullivan from Sullivan Creative will do a free mock up in exchange for a t-shirt. Cheryl moved we order 150 t-shirts, Margaret seconded, Motion passed 5-0.

Minutes to Approve:

Reviewed the minutes of November 18, 2021, Margaret made a few minor corrections. Margaret motioned to approve the minutes of November 18th, Cheryl seconded, motion passed 5-0.

Treasurer’s Report:

There is $16, 074. 86 in the savings account, that includes the unexpended balance of the town account from 2021 and the Land Use Change Tax percentage from 2021.

Mail :

The Ammonoosuc Local Advisory Committee is looking for new members if anyone is interested.

Brief discussion on the application for withdrawing groundwater for Littleton Water and Light.

NHACC Dues: Lindsay motioned that we pay the NHACC dues if they haven't been paid already. Cheryl seconded, motion passed 5-0.

Town Forest:

Liability Form Draft Review. Lindsay drafted a form based on what Tim had sent over from Primex. Vivian thinks the form should add what type of activity will be taking place. Veronica will send it to Primex for review.

Annual Report:

The BCC reviewed the draft Conservation Commission Report annual write up. There were minor changes and edits made to the report. Margaret motioned that we include the CC report into the annual Town Report, Cheryl seconded, motion passed 5-0.

Permit Chart:

Some typo and corrections were made to the draft permit chart. Nicole will forward to the Selectboard to see if they can approve it to be placed on the website.

Other/New Business

Nicole had sent out in an email that she is not interested in being reappointed when her term ends in March.

There was discussion on using the owl at future meetings and having the option of a hybrid meeting to try to increase participation.

Cheryl motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm. Vivian seconded, motion passed 5-0.

Meeting Adjourned 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole McGrath, Secretary

Next Meetings: 6pm (Library)

February 24

March 24

April 28