**Bethlehem Conservation Commission (BCC) meeting**

**April 20th, 2023**

**Meeting minutes**

**Location:** Library

**Committee members present:** Lindsay Webb, Rachelle Lyons, Cheryl Jensen, Betsey Phillips, Margaret Gale, Vivian Winterhoff, Veronica Morris

**In attendance:** Chris Jensen

Cheryl called the meeting to order at 06:04 pm.

**Public comment**

None.

**Mail received**

**Reviewing future wetlands permit applications**

In 2019, NHACC published in a one-page “Standard wetlands permit review – what you should know” factsheet. We should review that and check if there is more recent information.

The recent NHACC seminars on wetlands were helpful, but extremely technical and the information gained is challenging for us to apply in practice locally when it comes to specific properties.

Margaret commented that we need additional (more expert) support to evaluate wetlands applications, given how NHDES appears to be approving applications that are clearly impacting local wetlands.

Could Elise Lawson who is a soil scientist review any applications or at least provide some guidance for how we can fulfill the responsibilities of the BCC towards wetlands? Margaret will contact Elise to ask what she may be able to do for us.

This should be brought up at the upcoming NHACC Roundtable meeting as well.

UNH Cooperative Extension has Natural Resource Stewards – perhaps one of them can provide some advice? What about the NH Natural Heritage Bureau?

Town ordinances can be established around the protection of wetlands. See NHACC report from December 2007 on habitat audits: “Addressing Wildlife Habitat and Natural Resource Protection In Municipal Land Use Documents: Ideas for New Hampshire Municipalities”.

<https://www.nhacc.org/application/files/3316/6023/3261/Habitat_audits_for_communities_fall08.pdf>

**Additional mail received (not on mail list)**

The conservation project (submitted as a “dredge and fill application”) on the Rocks Estate is managed by Trout Unlimited. It’s an ecological project involving strategically adding wood to the stream to improve flow and habitat, rather than a standard dredge and fill application.

**Past meeting minutes to approve**

**Margaret made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 23rd, 2023, meeting with amendments agreed at this meeting. Rachelle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Treasurer’s report**

The BCC’s account balances are:

Town account: $870

Savings account: $17,474.09

**Roadside Clean-Up Day – review tasks**

The clean-up will take place on May 6th, 2023.

Rachelle said she cleaned up with a group of PSU students recently, and picked up 10 bags of trash on the edge of Bethlehem by the Twin Mountain town line, and towards Franconia.

Odd Fellows also cleaned up near the Bethlehem/Franconia town line recently.

Cheryl will send everyone a copy of the guidelines/flyer on what to do when drug paraphernalia is found.

1. Gazebo use confirmed. Picnic tables will be put out.
2. Confirmed. BES is doing their clean-up on May 5th. Ivan donated small vinyl gloves for the students.
3. Odd Fellows will pick up on Rt 142, from 302 down to the Hollow on May 6th.

Becky Beno (WMS) and Sue (BES) are probably coordinating when they will do their respective pick-ups.  
Woodland school will help, and will pick a spot, but will need guidance on where to pick up. Will do it on Friday May 5th. Betsey will suggest that they coordinate with BES on where to pick up.

1. Special dumpster confirmed at NCES.
2. Town officials notified.
3. We have plenty of blue bags and gloves (medium and upwards).
4. Betsey has spoken with volunteers to pick up bags. Alison Caruso can’t do it this year. Hasn’t yet heard from Barry or Dotti. Needs contact info for Dan and Lori Murphy. Veronica can reach out to some neighbors as well.

**Publicity**

Courier: 26th April;, will be sent to Caledonian Record; it’s on the Town website and will be posted on the Select Board’s Facebook page

Carol Hammarberg – yes; Rec website – yes; Co-op weekly specials will keep running until the clean-up has passed; Discover Bethlehem – yes.

North Country Community Email list will be submitted April 24th.

Facebook event has been created.

Cheryl will print color posters - Once printed, Vivian will leave posters at Maia Papaya, the Village store, the Post Office, The Littleton Food Co-op, the Town Hall and Library, and other places posters can go, including possibly Super Secret Ice-cream (only once tokens are confirmed).

Rachelle emailed Kristina a couple of times, but thinking she could go in person. Veronica will stop by and see if she can talk to Kristina.

Betsey collected $100 in donations towards ice-cream tokens.

Veronica has bug spray she can donate for people to use.

Hot spot roads were discussed.

**On the day**

Meet at 9.30am to set up.

Cheryl has printed sign-up sheets.

Back pick up people – not to pick up before 12.30pm.

**Other**

Writing thank you notes to be added as an agenda item to the meeting after the roadside clean-up.

**How to manage wetlands permits**

See discussion above under “Mail received”.

**Bretzfelder Committee**

Margaret volunteered to be the BCC rep on the Bretzfelder Committee for the next while.

**North Country Conservation Commission Roundtable (April 27th)**

Margaret is attending.

**Other/New Business**

**Litterati App**

Rachelle mentioned the Litterati App that could be used during the Roadside Clean-up. She trialed it with her students during the recent pick-up. It records what kind of trash is picked up and provides a report that can help us see what types of trash are dominant, e.g. plastic bottles, cans, etc.

**Bethlehem Conservation Commission email address**

Bringing the email address under the Town’s email service provider would cost $9/month. The town can cover the cost.

**Ivan made a motion to set up the Bethlehem Conservation Commission email address under bethlehemnh.org. Cheryl seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Next BCC meetings**

Thursday, June 22nd , 2023.

There will be no meeting in May 2023.

**Vivian made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Seconded by Cheryl. Motion unanimously passed.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm.**

Respectfully submitted by Vivian Winterhoff, Recording Secretary.