

Town of Pownal Conservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday August 22, 2023
7:00 pm, Mallett Hall

Members Present: Matt Welch, Dick Hogue, Janet Lynch, Kate Day, Wellens King

Approval of Minutes from 7/25/23: Matt mentioned that the only change to the minutes was the browntail moth grant is \$17,000 not \$19,000. Minutes approved with noted change.

Public comment: none.

Old business:

Conservation Easement- Janet brought up that she has issues with some of the language in the easement sent over by RRCT, notably regarding trapping. She also mentioned that the town should reserve the right to close the trails for any reason- not just hunting and trapping. She feels that it is dangerous to specify allowances because we don't know what the town's future will look like. She thinks it is safer to keep the terms a little looser, to state that the town reserves the right to decide what should be allowed in the future. Matt agreed that she is making a good point. Matt made the point that the town should reserve the right to close trails if problems should arise with public use. Wellens brought up the question of whether or not the selectboard would have the power to close the trail, or if that decision would have to go to town meeting.

It was suggested that we might consider changing the language to include the term "traditional sportsmans/ recreational activities" . Janet made mention that if we follow LMF's terms they do refer specifically to hunting, fishing and trapping.

Matt asked Janet if she would be willing to edit the terms that the CC has come up with to give to RRCT, she agreed.

Forest management plan- Matt mentioned that this needs to be updated per RRCT's request.

Kate Day said that she is not sure what the protocol would be regarding town-owned land. Matt asked when the next Selectboard meeting is - Kate stated Sept. 11.

Browntail Moth Grant:

- The CC has been asked to create and monitor a browntail moth management plan for the town. Matt suggested the idea of creating a scholarship for a HS student to help with this project. The following are considerations to take into account: identification by the public, lifecycle, mitigation.
- Janet suggested that the CC set up a gmail account specifically to accept communications related to this issue.
- Wellens asked if the CC would be responsible for using the mapping software?
- Wellens made mention of other towns holding a Browntail moth mitigation day. Matt questioned safety surrounding that idea.
- Kate will ask the Selectboard members about the feasibility of a scholarship.

New Business

Pumpkin Fest- Oct 13, 2023

- We have been asked if the CC wants to have a table.
- The suggestion was made that we have a flier available with Brown tail moth and other invasive species info. Wellens will look into putting together a flier with BTM info.
- Dick will check with the Cooperative Extension to see if literature on invasive species is available.
- Matt says that he will look into getting a large map to highlight areas of interest/ concern.

Planning Board Public Hearings - Oct 23, Nov 13.

-Kate suggested that we should have clear answers to any questions that might come up at the Selectboard and Town meetings regarding the conservation easement. The Town Special Meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11.

-Janet made mention of the flier that came in mail about a meeting on Sept 13 regarding plans for the Village District- Kate noted that it is being run by the Economic Sustainability Committee.

-Matt thanked all for coming. The Sept meeting is scheduled for 9/26 at 7pm. Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Wellens King