

Town of Pownal Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

6:30 PM, Mallett Hall

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by Matt Welch, and the following members were in attendance: Matt Welch, chairperson, Dick Hogue, Kathy Elders and Bob Van Milligan.

Elmwood Road Conservation Trust: Matt announced that a trail crew would be at the site from 10:00 until noon on September 25 to clear out brush and other obstructions from the proposed hiking trail. The necessity of establishing parking boundaries, utilizing a locked cable was discussed. Matt will discuss the practical details with the Road Commissioner.

Poland Range Woodlots: It was suggested that we begin to consider the Poland Range lots currently owned by the Town for feasibility of their use as a future conservation trust area in the northern area of the town. There was broad agreement for this endeavor. Kathy questioned whether the lots should be considered separately. However, since there are no obvious boundaries between the lots, all agreed that the woodlots should be considered as a single unit. Matt offered to contact the Maine Natural Areas Program for assistance in the form of geological and forest classification surveys. In addition, surveys could be conducted of flora and fauna, with special attention given to endangered or threatened species.

Browntail Moth Control: Kathy mentioned a program offered by Winslow Robinson which focuses on the removal of the nests. It was suggested we keep this program in mind when/if the state funds again become available.

Construction of a New CMP Substation: Matt inquired whether any of the members had heard anything about some plans that CMP had to construct another substation in Pownal. No one had heard of this, but all agreed to report any evidence of this proposed project to the Commission if they find credible evidence.

Establishment of a Wood Bank for Pownal: Dick brought up the idea of a wood bank that is currently used in Cumberland to assist families in need during the heating season by providing free firewood or oil credits to those in need. Trees cut in ditching operations in Pownal could be used for this purpose. There was broad and enthusiastic support for the concept, but questions addressing infrastructure and staffing were raised. After some discussion, it was the consensus that the best way forward would be to partner with another town. Dick has agreed to do more research in this area.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Matt thanked all in attendance, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bob Van Milligan.