

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 12, 2019

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Noel Dodge, Dean Locke, Eric Nuse, Jackie Stanton.

Absent: Hillary Emick, Denise Krause

Guests: Kelly Vandorn, Jacob Vandorn, Jared Jasinski

The February minutes were approved.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

The Selectboard approved a \$1250 allocation for us this year, along with a \$250 donation to the Conservation Reserve Fund. The Fund totals \$2750.

Any expenditures must be reported before June 30.

#### CONSERVATION RESERVE FUND

Dean reports that 26 paper and 9 online surveys have been returned. Of the 9 online ones, Dean finds that the response regarding personal funding of the CRF was: Probably, 55%; Yes, 22%; No, 11%; and Unsure, 11%. Of the 9, most folks found wildlife, rivers, and wetlands to be most important.

We need to get the survey out there for more response. It was suggested that Dean can send the link to Kyle Nuse, who could forward it to +100 people through Johnson Works.

#### MARCH GLADNESS

The first two talks were swell successes: The tree talk on the 4<sup>th</sup> drew 23 interested and engaged people and Dean's talk on bears got a whopping 33 bearophiles.

Lois has maps for the next 'do' on the 17<sup>th</sup>, a snowshoe hike on the college trails this Sunday. Coming up on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Sue will talk about wildflowers and Eric will take a more kid-friendly approach on the 31<sup>st</sup> with an array of bones, fur, and plastic scat.

#### CONNECTIVITY

Noel showed us maps from Vermont Conservation Design and identified important areas for connectivity along and behind the Hogback Road. Part of this land is already conserved in state land.

How can we use this info in the community? We can advocate for flexible guardrails and culvert replacements with water underpasses. We can save related important land.

Along the way he also showed us a rare floodplain island.

#### OUTDOOR RECREATION

Eris stated, and the group agreed, that he doesn't think this should be a CC project. He offered to be a liaison, however.

#### RISK ASSESSMENT

FEMA is offering a workshop on March 26 to assess risk for flooding. We all agreed that this is not our cup of tea.

#### A NEW MEMBER

Jared Jasinski, who impressed us with his knowledge, would like to join the CC. He's into conservation, preservation, and habitat creation

#### BUSH HONEYSUCKLE AT BEARD'S

Sue proposed working with Chris Whitlock's high school class to cut, burn, and burn the bush honeysuckle at Beard's. We could form teams to cut, drag it out, burn the stumps, and get rid of it in a bonfire. A picnic on the beach would be in order. She thinks we could do it in a day with enough people. She'll pursue it.

#### MSC

- This year's snow pack has made it too difficult to hunt rodents, resulting in starvation conditions for owls. So sadly, Noel found a Screech Owl dead of starvation on River Rd West. He reports that most raptors will have trouble and that 80-90% of those in their first year will die.
- Sue suggested taking pity on tick-eating possums and building them houses; she was met with ridicule on the parts of, who else, Dean and Noel. Varmints, they said. Cute, she said. Eat garbage, they said. Eat ticks, she said.
- There's no further information about the proposed path at Beard's.
- Sue also suggested kids making fairy gardens in containers as a TNL project this summer. The response was only a little less hilarity driven.
- Eric will attend the upcoming Natural Resources Workshop.

#### ACTION LIST:

- Sue will pursue knotweed and bush honeysuckle removal at Beard's.

Adjourned at 8:45

Next meeting is on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at the Library at 6:45.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary