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MINUTES
September 7, 2023

MEMBER ROLL CALL:

Ralph Lutjen, Chairman, Present	Ted Slader (Alternate) - Excused
Josh Shackford, Present	Marc Ohlson – Excused
Michael Brooks – Present	Noreen Downs (Alternate) - Excused
Mike Mauro, Selectmen’s Rep. – Present	
Emily Bass – Present	
Mike Mosher - Present	

OTHERS PRESENT: Amanda Hayford - Madison TV, Katharine Young, Land Use Boards Administrator, Mike Morin, USVLT

MEETING POSTED: This meeting was posted at Madison Town Hall Upper & Lower, Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on August 31, 2023.

CALL TO ORDER: Lutjen called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

ELEVATION OF ALTERNATES: Lutjen stated there is no need to elect alternates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Motion** by Shackford, seconded by Mauro to approve the August 3, 2023 minutes as written. The motion passed **unanimously**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bass stated that at Hurricane Point, the sign is rotted and illegible and leaning against a tree and there is also a tree down at the beginning of the trail that completely blocks the loop. Shackford stated he would talk to the DPW about getting the tree removed

Motion by Lutjen to replace the sign and posts. **This motion was not seconded, nor voted on and was withdrawn by Lutjen.**

Brooks asked if the sign was a brown sign with routed yellow letters. Bass stated it is. Brooks stated he would go and check out the sign and see what needed to be done. Brooks further stated that depending on the condition of the sign and if it is just a matter of sanding down the current one and repainting the yellow letters, that he could take the sign to the fire station and work on it over the winter and set new posts in the spring. Brooks stated if a new sign is needed, maybe contact the Vocational Department at Kennett High to make the sign.

Bass also brought up an issue with Loon Island and that it has shrunk and people are moving rocks to make an outward rock pool and neighbors have been going and putting rocks up against it so it will not erode. Bass stated she put up signs six years ago that say “don’t move the rocks for erosion...” and a neighbor brought up a good point and asked what is the difference of having a water break be out from the island rather than it having to be right up against the island? Bass stated it has been that way for years and she felt this was a good question to bring to the Commission and she stated it is still a water break. Shackford asked where people are taking the rocks from and Bass stated from the edge of the island. Brooks stated it is a technical alteration of terrain and to leave it alone. Brooks stated he would call DES Shoreline Protection for clarification on Monday.

Motion by Bass that somebody calls somebody to ask if an outer break is sufficient to keep the water erosion and does it need to be right up against the island. **This motion was not seconded, nor voted on and was withdrawn by Bass.**

Brooks stated he would call DES Shoreline Protection for clarification on Monday.

OLD BUSINESS:

Update from Tim Nolin: Young stated she received a call from Nolin and that he had been contacted by Mike Veilleux about cutting down some trees near the Goodwin Burke Forest and that this request has happened in the past. Young further stated there are dead oaks and approximately 15 trees that are dead from gypsy moth and the trees are in striking distance of Veilleux’s improvement and that there is no value to the town as it is pulp wood and Veilleux would pay any costs. Young stated she told Nolin the town would need a signed liability waiver and she stated she thought this request needed to be referred to the Selectmen. Mauro stated that is what was done last time.

Chain of Ponds Update: Mauro asked Morin how the negotiations are going? Morin stated they have a draft Purchase and Sales Agreement and are in the process of going through legal counsel.

Chain of Ponds Acquisition Letter: Morin stated that the Acquisition letter is in final form and ready to be signed. Mauro addressed Shackford and asked if he thought this would need three signatures from the Select Board as the Select Board will be the deciding factor on funding. Shackford stated this is just a letter of support from the Conservation Commission and the Selectmen will have the final say. Brooks stated that Lutjen would need to sign as Chairman of the Conservation Commission and that the Conservation Commission is supporting this effort and there is nothing binding about this letter and that it is a letter of support in the effort to obtain funding for the project which is the acquisition of the Crowe Conservation Easement.

Chain of Ponds Draft Grant Funding Letter: Morin explained to the Commission that he had drafted a rough draft letter that he would like the Madison Conservation Commission to sign in support

of the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust's efforts to procure funding via the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund's Source Water Protection grant program to help fund the conservation of 625 acres of land and water in the Town of Madison, known as Madison Chain of Ponds.

Motion by Brooks, seconded by Mauro to clean up draft grant letter and put it on Madison Conservation Commission's letterhead and authorize Chairman Lutjen to sign out of session. The motion passed **unanimously**.

East Davis Pond Lot Letter: Mauro stated this was discussed at the Selectmen's meeting and no action has been taken to date.

Master Plan: Lutjen stated he wanted to simplify Chapter 8 by outlining the current state of affairs like expansion of population etc., and also outline all conservation easements and properties as well as any future things the Conservation Commission is doing which would include the Chain of Ponds which is the most significant because of the 625 +/- acres protecting a pristine lake. Lutjen further stated that the Conservation Commission getting the easement is very substantial and rather than go through all of the data, he will draft it and he does not want to make this a 20 page document with an Appendix. Lutjen stated the Commission will be seeing this next year.

Digitalizing Property Town Reports: Lutjen stated that since Nolin is doing the property assessments, he wants to modify the property descriptions for any adjustments relevant and wants volunteers. Lutjen further stated that once Nolin is done with the property assessments in November, he would like members to sign up

Mosher stated he looked at the Goodwin Town Forest off Lead Mine Road and it has grown up quickly and he believes it has not been burned or managed since 2015 except for mowing and he thought it might be good to look at this next year or over a couple of years to look at cutting back the overgrowth and he believes it is too tall now to burn it and maybe cut it down and then burn it. Lutjen stated this is important with respect to the budget and we need Nolin to assign a price. Brooks stated that Nolin needs to clarify for the Commission what is the intent of the management plan and if a burn is prescribed, Brooks could get fire departments to do a training burn.

Shackford stated the town spent a lot of money for a burn in the past and nothing has been done over several years and maybe, something should be done.

Lutjen stated they would ask Nolin at the October meeting.

Property Review Commitments and Sign-Up: Tabled to November, 2023.

Email from Darron Laughland, Sawyer River Group: Young read an email from Downs aloud and stated that Downs is going to contact Laughland directly.

NEW BUSINESS: Young stated there was no new business to report.

SELECTMAN’S REPORT: Mauro stated he had nothing to report as far as conservation goes and he gave an update regarding the repairs to the roads from the damage from the two storms and that Colby Hill’s paving was going to be completed today.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Ohlson was not present so there was nothing to report.

ADMINISTRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE:

Budget Drawdown: Nothing to report.

Account Updates: Lutjen went over the accounts ending August 31, 2023 and there was an expenditure to Nolin for the maintenance of the properties dated August 15, 2023 in the amount of \$2,530.00 which came out of the Forest Maintenance Account.

Brooks requested that the accounts and ending balances for each month be put on the Agenda.

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Mauro to produce account balances on the Agenda. The motion passed **unanimously**.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Shackford, seconded Mosher to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned with all in favor at 4:30 pm.

Submitted by:

Katharine Young
Land Use Boards Administrator