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**MINUTES**  
**July 6, 2023**

**MEMBER ROLL CALL:**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kasia Scentsas - Madison TV, Katharine Young, Land Use Boards Administrator, Tim Nolin, Marcia McKenna, Mike Morin - USVLT and Sally Manikian - Conservation Fund

**MEETING POSTED:** This meeting was posted at Madison Town Hall Upper & Lower, Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on June 29, 2023.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Lutjen called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm.

**ELEVATION OF ALTERNATES:** **Motion** by Lutjen, seconded by Mauro to elevate Downs for this meeting. The motion passed **unanimously**.

**APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES:** **Motion** by Lutjen, seconded by Mauro to approve the June 1, 2023 minutes as amended.

Discussion: Young stated that Downs requested some changes be made to the June 1, 2023 minutes which she emailed to Young before the July 6, 2023 meeting. Young made those changes and included them in the June 1, 2023 minutes which Young provided to the Members in draft for the July 6, 2023 meeting. Young read aloud the changes just so everyone is on the same page. Young also stated that Darren Laughland could not attend a meeting per Downs request until the October 5, 2023 monthly meeting. No direction was given to Young to schedule Darren Laughland for the October 5, 2023 meeting.

The motion passed **unanimously**.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Property Review Commitments and Sign-up:** Tim Nolin went over the property list of properties that are to be updated by him within the budget of \$1,200.00 that the members agreed on as follows:

McNair Easement – Durgin Pond monitoring does not need to be reviewed this year.

McNair Easement – Durgin Farm and Stacy Mtn. have not been monitored in quite some time and Nolin stated these two should be at the top of the list and would cost \$520.00 out of the originally budgeted \$1,200.00.

Barclay Lot – Nolin asked if the commission wanted monitoring on this lot and members stated no.

Everett Parker/Gage Lot – Nolin stated this lot should be monitored this year due to possible Gypsy moth damage.

\*Goodwin – Burke Town Forest – Nolin stated this does not need to be monitored this year.

\*Wold Lot – Nolin stated this does not need to be monitored this year.

Nolin stated the above two lots with an \* will be informally looked at this year while doing annual trail work.

McKenna stated the Commission thought they would have Nolin do Goodwin as there is a resident and the Commission was not going to monitor this as a Commission but it will be done by a licensed forester because of the resident living adjacent to this property.

Ward Lot – Nolin stated this does not need to be monitored this year.

Blair’s Location – Nolin stated this should be monitored this year.

Cascades – Nolin stated this should be monitored this year.

Cedar Swamp – Nolin stated this was done last year and the abutters on this is The Nature

Conservancy and Mudd so Nolin is not too concerned and this could be done every couple of years.

B&M Lots (Currier, Lyman and Nickerson) – Nolin looked at those this past spring for another reason.

Nolin stated he could include the Barclay Lot in the amount budgeted. Nolin will email his list to Young.

Bass thanked McKenna for taking the time to come to meetings and giving her updates and input on the properties.

**McNair Easement Amendment Update:** Downs had nothing to report and has been unable to talk with Laurie Corron.

**Chain of Ponds Update:** Mike Morin, USVLT stated he emailed Young the draft Acquisition of Conservation Easement of Madison Chain of Ponds and asked if the Commission had a chance to review and if they had any questions/comments. Lutjen suggested the Commission’s attorney should review it and the Commission Members agreed. Lutjen stated that the Selectmen did a legal review with their attorney, Cordell Johnston, Esquire and he provided a memo dated December 13, 2022 outlining the requirements for disbursements out of the various accounts. Lutjen stated the Land Use Account has a current balance of \$208,758.00 and this is the account that would be used to purchase the Chain of Ponds and does not require a public vote and Lutjen read the following paragraph from Attorney Johnston’s letter aloud as follows:

“The Conservation Commission may spend money from the Conservation Fund without a town meeting vote. However, any **expenditure of funds for the purchase of an interest in real estate is subject to approval by the Selectmen and requires a public hearing**”.

Lutjen asked Young to revise the draft Acquisition letter from Mike Morin, USVLT to include the language in bold above.

**Motion** by Lutjen, seconded by Mauro to circulate the draft Acquisition letter with the Commission's revision per Cordell Johnston, Esquire's letter to Cordell Johnston, Esquire for review. The motion passed **unanimously**.

Sally Manikian is still negotiating the contract and should have something for the Commission at the August meeting.

**Review of Master Plan:** Lutjen stated he has submitted to Young some minimal modifications as to dates and the mentioning of the Chain of Ponds, which is a major addition to the Master Plan. Lutjen stated he is requesting comments again from the Commission Members. McKenna stated that the Chain of Ponds is mentioned in the Master Plan but it can be expanded on. Downs stated her input would be that the Commission verify the maps, lots and acreage and the Barclay lot needs to be added to the list and USLVT needs to be added to the partners that are listed on Page 11 of the Master Plan. Lutjen asked that Downs forward her comments to Young.

Bass stated that the Master Plan should be provided to new Commission Members when they join the Conservation Commission. Bass also stated that the scholarship activities should be added as one of the things the Commission has accomplished and she was unsure of what section this should be added to and asked Downs for input. Downs stated maybe in the Objectives and Goals which is to develop a strategy of getting scholarships for environmental camps. Lutjen asked Bass to submit her requests to Young. Bass also added reviewing the Definitions.

McKenna stated when the Commission redoes the property reports, that abutters have changed and this will need to be updated and one of the goals of the Commission was always to look for the possibilities of expansion of Conservation lands and the Commission may want to send letters to the abutters offering the Commission's position of educating people about easements and what they are in expanding conservation land.

Downs stated she reviewed the Wildlife Action Plan and there is a whole data base depending on what kind of properties might be conserved and whether there are species that may be endangered within the state or in a particular region. She asked if the Commission wants to reference this and she will write up something. Downs further stated the Commission may want to touch base with an owner and let them know they may be in a high habit region of an endangered species. McKenna stated this information could be included in the letters the Commission sends out.

**Digitalizing Property Town Reports:** Young stated to the Commission that the company she researched from Missouri would need to know from the Commission how they would like the documents formatted, either in micro word or pdf. Lutjen stated it would have to be micro word so they can make changes to the properties. Young stated she would have to check with her contact on pricing. Bass stated it could be done in Word and create their own PDF very easily. Young stated that she does not have the time to do this. Downs asked there is a scan feature on the copier in the office. Young stated yes, and reiterated she does not have the time to do this. Downs stated maybe she could chip away at it a little bit at a time. Young asked the Commission how they expect to access the property reports and where would it be stored? Downs stated it would probably need to be accessible on the website and this would be the most convenient. Young explained that everything scanned to the website is scanned PDF so nothing can be altered. Bass offered to take on the research of this and what it would take to get all questions answered. Lutjen stated they could digitize Nolin's monitoring of the property descriptions. Nolin stated this will already be in digital format when he submits his reports. Lutjen stated that scanning in the properties could be done over time. Bass stated she believes you could take the property book to Staples and they can do it. Bass will look in to this and report back to the Commission.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Expansion of Lyman Forest:** Downs stated that one of the parcels that connects the Chain of Ponds to the Lyman, Currier and Blankenstein lots is Tax Map 116 Lot 23. Downs is proposing that the Commission considered asking to have this lot become part of the Lyman Lot and it is adjacent and cannot be merged

because the state owns the railroad right-of-way. Downs stated this will do several things, consolidate the conservation oversight with the Lyman Lot, help protect the water quality, protect the east shoreline of Davis Pond and enhance the water quality, provides contiguous connection for wildlife corridor with the Chain of Ponds which becomes an abutter. Downs further stated this would also abut the Blankenstein property which makes an even more contiguous wildlife corridor that is available. Downs stated that the town owns this parcel already and she would like to be able to tell the Chain of Ponds and USVLT the Commission is conserving this lot as part of the Lyman Lot and make it official and that it is not just town owned and is part of the property the Commission oversees and manages.

**Motion** by Downs, seconded by Bass to recommend to the Madison Board of Selectmen that the landlocked property owned by the Town of Madison on Map 116, Lot 23 (12.1 acres) be added to the Madison Conservation Commission existing managed Lyman Lot (Map 221, Lot 10) for purposes of consolidating these two adjacent parcels for oversight and enhanced protection of Davis Pond water quality. The **motion was not voted on and did not pass as written.**

Discussion: Brooks stated we are not in any kind of jeopardy right now and the town owns this property and it can never be developed as it is wetlands. Brooks asked why they would not connect it with Blankenstein to the North which it apparently touches and it does not touch on the other side of the railroad because the railroad is in fee, the ownership is not an easement, there is a fee ownership that separates those two and to Brooks it does not make any sense to connect across another property that is owned in fee when there is a property that touches to the North.

Nolin asked if the town owns the Blankenstein property and Downs stated no that Green Mountain Conservation Group will ultimately own this property. Nolin stated you are not really attaching it to the Lyman Lot but the town would be designating it as part of the town's Conservation Commission managed properties and considering it as conservation land as an official designation and it is not going to change what happens on it as nothing will. Nolin further stated that to have that designation, it is a good thing as it will show up on a map as a designation of conservation land.

Downs stated they could modify it and put it into conservation and call it the "East Davis Pond Lot" and designate it as a named property to make it a conserved property and would not be merged with the Blankenstein property as the town will not own the Blankenstein property but Green Mountain Conservation Group will.

Lutjen stated that the motion on the table should be revised from Map 116, Lot 23 (12.1 acres) be added to the Madison Conservation Commission to now read Map 116, Lot 23 (12.1 acres) be **designated** to the Madison Conservation Commission.

**Motion** by Downs, seconded by Bass to recommend to the Madison Board of Selectmen that the landlocked property owned by the Town of Madison on Map 116, Lot 23 (12.1 acres) be designated as Madison Conservation Commission managed property and called the East Davis Pond Lot. The motion passed **unanimously.**

Brooks stated he has a request from the DPW and asked Nolin if he knows of any Hemlock and they need 8 x 8 timbers for some repairs. Nolin stated the town does not have much Hemlock but he may have some. Brooks will do this through Young.

**SELECTMAN'S REPORT:** Mauro, Selectmen's Rep., stated that the stumping from the cutting behind the town garage has been done and chipped and the DPW will be addressing the sand pile for residents and moving it back as to not encroach on the Fire Department and will be adding a chip pile for residents. Mauro also stated that as to the culverts at the head of the lake, the DOT changed their position and not doing it due to a historical cultural issue.

**PLANNING BOARD REPORT:** Ohlson stated that the Planning Board met with the Selectmen at their July 5, 2023 meeting regarding STR's and that the Selectmen are going to pursue enforcement of STR's post-March 2022 and Ohlson stated that the Planning Board is going to wait for direction from the Selectmen. Ohlson further stated the Planning Board will work on 1.3b.

**ADMINISTRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Budget Drawdown:** There was no change.

**Account Updates:** Lutjen stated that \$10,216.61 was deposited into the Forest Maintenance Account on June 2, 2023 for the timber cut and the only transaction over a two-month time period plus interest. He further stated the only expense would be the check for Old Home Week for the Wildlife Encounters of Barrington New Hampshire.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** By Lutjen, seconded by Mauro to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned with all in favor at 5:04 pm.

Submitted by:

Katharine Young  
Land Use Boards Administrator