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MINUTES
April 3, 2025

MEMBER ROLL CALL:

Ralph Lutjen, Chairman – Present
Josh Shackford, Vice Chair – Excused
Michael Brooks –Present
Mike Mosher – Present
Selectmen’s Rep. - Excused
Marc Ohlson – Excused
Liza Rogerson (Alternate) - Present

Ted Slader (Alternate) – Excused
Marcia McKenna - Present

OTHERS PRESENT: Aysia Wellinghurst - Madison TV and Katharine Young, Land Use Boards Administrator and Shawn Bergeron, Bergeron Technical Services

MEETING POSTED: The meeting was posted in the Madison Town Hall Upper & Lower levels, Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on March 24, 2025.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lutjen called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm and confirmed there is a quorum present.

ELEVATION OF ALTERNATES: There was no elevation of alternates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 10, 2025 Work Session Minutes:

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Mosher to approve the March 10, 2025 work session minutes as written. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

March 10, 2025 Minutes:

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Mosher to approve the March 10, 2025 regular meeting minutes as written. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Shawn Bergeron from Bergeron Technical Services addressed the commission regarding the Chain of Ponds and the Crowe property subdivision on Forest Pines Road. He explained that the Purchase and Sale Agreement had a deadline of November, 2025, but one or more funding agencies required all documents, including an approved subdivision and easement language, by early August, 2025.

Bergeron stated that they were waiting for a soil scientist to flag potential wetlands on the property. He mentioned that they planned to have the conceptual application ready for the June 4, 2025 Planning Board meeting, with a submission deadline of May 13, 2025. Their goal was to have everything set for final approval at the July 2, 2025 meeting.

Bergeron inquired about the progress of the easement language that the board was working on. Chairman Lutjen responded that they had submitted comprehensive comments, including a markup of the latest draft, to the other party about a month ago. Young stated that this was emailed to Upper Saco Valley Land Trust (USVLT) on March 12, 2025. Chairman Lutjen noted that the draft previously submitted to the Madison Conservation Commission by USVLT was incomplete, with certain language issues and missing provisions like L-CHIP etc.

The commission discussed the timeline for the easement negotiations, emphasizing the need for engagement soon, due to the 90-day due diligence period required by some funding sources. They determined that the end of July, 2025 was the latest date for a fully negotiated deal.

Bergeron offered the commission assistance from his office in communicating the urgency of the matter to USVLT with whom they have a good working relationship. The commission appreciated the offer and discussed the need for a complete document reflecting USVLT's thinking before engaging their own attorney.

McKenna stated that USVLT has not provided the commission with language that L-CHIP and Fish & Game want in the Conservation Easement and they are funding sources.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tim Nolin – Forest Land Improvement: This item was not discussed as Tim Nolin was not present at the meeting.

Chain of Ponds Update – Doug Burnell and Linda Comeau, USVLT: Burnell and Comeau were not present at the meeting.

Conservation Easement Deed Revisions – Update: This item was previously discussed under Public Comment.

Property Review Commitments: Chairman Lutjen mentioned that he had collected files and was engaged in the property review process for the two properties he took over from Ohlson and Gray which were Stacy Mt. – Bald Ledge property and McNair-Durgin Farm property. He stated that the work was ongoing and would be completed at some point.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Lutjen expressed eagerness to get an update on the progress of the Master Plan. He shared that he had recently gone through some old files which David Riss had which included correspondence related to the previous Master Plan. He noted that much of the previous work was still relevant and coherent, containing principles and important considerations that could be beneficial for the current Master Plan process.

McKenna inquired about the possibility of conducting a survey, similar to one done for a previous Master Plan. The commission discussed the importance of having conservation-related questions included in any future survey for the Master Plan.

SELECTMAN'S REPORT: At this time, it is unclear as to who was assigned from the Selectboard as the Selectman's Rep.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT – Marc Ohlson, Chairman: Ohlson was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.

ADMINISTRATIVE/CORRESPONDENCE:

Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) 2024 Quality Report: The commission briefly discussed the GMCG 2024 Quality Report. They noted that the report indicated healthy levels for most parameters. Some specific issues were mentioned, such as water treatment chemicals being visible in samples and high phosphorus levels near roads due to salt use.

The commission discussed inviting Jill Emerson from GMCG to the May 1, 2025 meeting to go over the report and discuss trends over the years. Young stated she would contact her to see what her availability was and she will add Emerson to the May Agenda if she can attend.

Green Mountain Conservation Group Summer Camp Program – Email from Heather O'Donnell, Rec Director: The commission discussed the GMCG Summer Camp Program. They mentioned having \$500.00 allocated for this purpose and discussed the possibility of raising additional funds through donations.

The commission discussed how they could increase their Gift Account line so they could continuously offer an education summer camp program. Brooks suggested that a letter be sent out to all contactors the town does business with and ask for a donation for the education fund for the Recreation Department's summer camp.

Chairman Lutjen stated that there should be a policy in place for the donations that are going to be collected at the Old Home Week animal presentation and discussed the need to establish a protocol for handling cash donations, suggesting the use of a locked box to ensure transparency and accountability. It was further discussed that there should be a two-party verification when counting the donations. Young stated she would look into ordering a receptacle and that she will also be responsible for making sure the receptacle is returned to the town hall after the animal presentation and she will make sure there is a two-party verification with counting any monies.

Appointments:

Young stated that the commission needs vote on a Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2025. Young further stated that Lutjen and Mosher have already been sworn in at the town hall for their terms.

Motion by Mosher, seconded by McKenna to re-appoint Ralph Lutjen as Chairman for 2025. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

Motion by Mosher, seconded by Lutjen to appoint Michael Brooks as Vice Chairman for 2025. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

The commission discussed the need for Tim Nolin's maintenance plan and the possibility of scheduling a timber harvest due to concerns about oak tree health. They decided to request a meeting with Tim to discuss his proposed plan of work and to get an update on the health of the oak stands.

Chairman Lutjen stated that with regard to Nolin's reports, that the commission needs to be more active and respond to Nolin's comments. Brooks stated that Nolin does what needs to be done and if there are action items that are needed, Nolin needs to tell the commission.

McKenna stated that in the Goodwin Forest, the scrub oak is growing back and maybe it needs to be brush hogged again to keep the scrub oak down.

McKenna also brought up again, the process to be able to phone in for a meeting and that there should be a procedure in place. Brooks stated that there is a procedure in place and a person on the phone cannot make a quorum and any voting would have to be done by roll call vote.

Account Balances: Chairman Lutjen reported on the account balances, noting minimal activity in most accounts. The capital reserve account was reported to have a balance of \$67,000.00 It was mentioned that \$10,000.00 would be coming out of that account for maintenance appropriations.

Account Balances as of March 14, 2025

Conservation Land Use Change Tax: **\$225,771.86 + \$.86 cents Interest = \$225,772.72**

Forest Maintenance Account: **\$61,933.43 + \$.24 cents Interest = \$61,933.67**

Conservation Gift Account: **\$261.76**

Capital Reserve Account: **Balance as of March 1, 2025 is \$67,261.48 & April 1, 2025**

\$67,395.77

Account Balances as of February 28, 2025

Conservation Land Use Change Tax: **\$225,770.13 + \$1.73 Interest = \$225,771.86**

Forest Maintenance Account: **\$61,932.96 + \$.47 cents Interest = \$61,933.43**

Conservation Gift Account: **\$261.76**

Capital Reserve Account: **Balance as of March 1, 2025 is \$67,261.48**

Adjournment:

Motion by Brooks, seconded by Mosher to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 pm. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

Submitted by:

Katharine Young
Land Use Boards Administrator