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MINUTES
June 5, 2025

MEMBER ROLL CALL:

Ralph Lutjen, Chairman – Present
Mike Brooks, Vice Chair – Present
Mike Mosher – Present
Rick Judkins - Selectmen’s Rep. - Excused
Marc Ohlson – Excused

Ted Slader (Alternate) – Present
Marcia McKenna - Present
Josh Shackford - Present
Liza Rogerson (Alternate) – Excused

OTHERS PRESENT: Kasia Scontsas - Madison TV, Katharine Young, Land Use Boards Administrator, Tim Nolin, Forest Land Improvement

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lutjen called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

ELEVATION OF ALTERNATES: Chairman Lutjen stated there was no need for elevation of alternates as a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Lutjen asked for any comments or issues with the minutes from May 1, 2025 and the May 6, 2025 work session minutes..

Motion by Shackford, seconded by Mosher to approve the May 1, 2025 and May 6, 2025 minutes as written. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: A volunteer from Upper Saco Valley Land Trust (USVLT) was present and expressed interest in discussing the Chain of Ponds project. Chairman Lutjen acknowledged this and indicated the commission would address it during the relevant agenda item.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tim Nolin – Forest Land Improvement: Nolin provided an update on the forest land improvement project, particularly focusing on the Goodwin Burke property and the Jackman Ridge piece. He reported that he and his colleague, Adam, had recently inspected the area to assess the damage caused by gypsy moth infestation.

Nolin noted that the damage within Goodwin Burke was irregular and scattered, unlike the more severe and widespread damage seen in the Mount Washington Valley. He described finding dead and stressed trees scattered throughout the area, with small clusters of severe damage in quarter-acre to half-acre areas. The worst affected area was identified as the spine of the ridge running up above the old lead mine site, approximately a quarter mile from Lead Mine Road. Nolin estimated that about 5% of the stand, or around 50,000 board feet of the million board feet of oak in the stand, was affected by mortality or severe stress.

Nolin recommended proceeding with the harvest as planned in the management plan, focusing on thinning for quality and creating small group selections for regeneration in areas with significant mortality. He suggested that the size of these group selections would range from a quarter acre to about an acre, with possibly one area of up to two acres.

Regarding access, Nolin proposed using a new landing site on Lead Mine Road, about 75 yards east of where the power lines intersect the road. He noted that this location would be on drier ground and further from sensitive cultural sites near the old lead mine.

Nolin also mentioned potential challenges with underground utilities and the need for some minor road work to accommodate large trucks. He suggested that if summer conditions remain too wet, they might consider conducting the harvest in winter.

The commission expressed interest in proceeding with the project. Nolin agreed to prepare a more detailed plan, including maps, logistics, and volume estimates, for the July meeting.

Mosher questioned if there is any revenue from harvesting to cover costs? Nolin stated yes, and he gave a very rough estimate of approximately \$20,000.00 of revenue that would go to the town.

Nolin further stated that in thinning areas, most of the stand is remaining oak and beech and the beech is in poor quality and is the least valuable. He also stated that the Ash trees will be dead in a few years because of the Southern Pine Beetle.

Chain of Ponds Update: Chairman Lutjen provided an update on the Chain of Ponds project. He reported that a meeting had been held with the commission's attorney on Tuesday night to review the agreement. The issues had been narrowed down, and the lawyers for both parties would be discussing these points to move the project forward.

Chairman Lutjen mentioned that the anticipated closing date was set for around November 15th. He explained that the delay was due to the due diligence requirements of certain grantees. The

commission aimed to provide their assurance about the easement in sufficient time for the November 15th closing.

Chairman Lutjen noted that surveys and other preparatory work were underway, including a baseline plan that was in the hands of (USVLT). He also mentioned that USVLT had been having productive discussions with potential grant providers.

There was some discussion about communication issues between the parties. Chairman Lutjen emphasized that from their perspective, the communication problem originated from USVLT, citing a six-week delay in response to their comments submitted on March 12th.

A representative from USVLT was present and acknowledged the communication issues but suggested they were on both sides. This led to some debate about the specifics of the communication timeline and process.

The commission agreed that the project was moving forward, and the next steps would involve communication between the attorneys to resolve the remaining issues.

Conservation Easement Deed Revisions: The conservation easement deed revisions had been submitted. No further discussion was recorded for this agenda item.

Property Review Commitments: It was noted that all property review commitments had been completed. There was a brief discussion about the need for Chairman Lutjen to meet with Young, Land Use Boards Administrator to ensure all comments made during the reviews will be incorporated into the updated property records. This was in preparation for digitizing the records.

There was also a brief exchange about the possibility of making the digitized format workable for future updates, such as changes to property boundaries.

New Business: No new business was discussed.

Selectman's Report: Judkins, the Selectman's Representative, was not present at the meeting. No report was given.

Planning Board Report: Ohlson, the Planning Board Chairman, was not present at the meeting. However, a brief update was provided about a Planning Board meeting that had taken place the previous night.

It was reported that Bergeron Technical Services attended the Planning Board meeting the previous night and presented a Preliminary Review for a five-lot subdivision plan to the Planning Board. Four of the lots were approximately 2.5 acres each with 200 feet of road frontage. The fifth lot, intended to be owned by USVLT, had only 100 feet of road frontage, which was a concern for the Planning Board.

It was suggested that creating a paper road on the cul-de-sac would address this issue, but this was not agreeable.. As a result, the applicants were told by the Planning Board that they would need to apply for a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA).

It was noted that the applicants were now reworking their lot configurations to see if they could meet the requirements without needing a variance. The commission briefly discussed the access options for the property, including access from Boulder Road and Madison Shores.

Account Balances as of April 1, 2025 – April 30, 2025

Conservation Land Use Change Tax: **\$225,775.50 + \$5.57 Interest = \$225,781.07**

Forest Maintenance Account: **\$61,934.43 + \$1.52 cents Interest = \$61,935.95**

Conservation Gift Account: **\$261.76 + \$.01 cents Interest = \$261.77**

Capital Reserve Account: **Balance as of April 1, 2025 is \$67,395.77**

Chairman Lutjen noted that there had been only a few dollars of interest income and no expenses from any of the accounts, so the balances remained essentially the same as in previous months.

Administrative Correspondence: Young, Land Use Boards Administrator discussed a bill she received on June 2, 2025 from Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) for the \$500.00 which is for Summer Camp Education Programs they are going to provide to the Recreation Department. Young stated she was uncomfortable paying the full amount upfront before services were rendered sometime in July. The commission decided that Young should pay \$100.00 for each session as they are completed by GMCG and she will check with O'Donnell, Recreation Director as sessions are completed and make sure payment is sent.

In addition to the agenda items, several other topics were discussed:

1. Fundraising for Educational Programs: The commission discussed plans to solicit donations from local businesses to support their educational programs. McKenna agreed to draft a simple paragraph explaining their goals, which would be reviewed at the next meeting and potentially used for fundraising efforts at the August wildlife presentation.
2. Future Initiatives: There was a brief discussion about potential future initiatives for the commission, particularly in light of potential changes in the town due to development. It was suggested that the commission might need to focus on reforestation and management of existing properties, especially following the planned timber harvest.
3. McKenna asked what else is the commission going to do now that the "Chain of Ponds" is wrapping up and she further asked the commission what goals and objectives should they be looking at.
4. Next Meeting: The commission discussed whether they would hold a meeting in August, as they typically do not. They agreed to decide at the July meeting whether an August meeting would be necessary.

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Shackford to adjourn the meeting. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously** and the meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Submitted by,

Katharine Young
Land Use Boards Administrator