

West Fairlee Conservation Commission

Draft Minutes – Meeting of December 16, 2014

Attending: John Boutin, Geoffrey Gardner, Coeey Kearns, Ann Stephens, Peggy Willey, Rebecca Wurdak.

The meeting began at 7:10 PM.

1. Minutes: It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the Commission's meeting of November 18, 2014.

2. Treasurer's Report: As of the end of November, the Conservation Commission Fund showed a total of \$7,728.60, reflecting expenditures of \$803.47 and interest of \$0.33. The Brushwood Community Forest Fund showed a total of \$72,733.07, reflecting expenditures of \$375.00 and interest of \$2.78. It was noted that Attorney Paul Gillies's firm has charged the Brushwood Fund and the Conservation Fund a total of \$1,289.73: 8/18/14 - \$70.00; 9/15/14 - \$844.73; 11/17/14 - \$375.00. This is for advice and resolution of the right of way issue in Brushwood Community Forest. It exceeds the \$1,000 approved for this work by the Selectboard. It was also noted that this limit was agreed to by Mr. Gillies and was set out in a memo of understanding between the Conservation Commission and Mr. Gillies at the end of July 2014. Finally, it was noted that the Commission has still not received from Mr. Gillies the letter he was to write and send to the owners who claim the right of way and which was to be recorder in the Fairlee and West Fairlee land offices. Peggy will contact Mr. Gillies about these issues.

3. Water: Thursday, February 5 will be the date for the public meeting and presentation on understanding the E. coli levels present in the Ompompanoosuc as it enters the Village and steps that can be taken in response to this. We will include Vershire and Thetford in this program since they share our stretch of the Ompompanoosuc with us. Speakers will include representatives of the State's Basin 14 river experts, including people we have worked with on rivers issues over the past several years. There was a discussion of how we can get as many people as possible to this meeting. The Commission will meet once again on this topic before our regular meeting in January.

4. Brushwood Community Forest: **A)** There was a long discussion of distribution of keys to the gate on Bloodbrook Road. Keys will go to the following: the Selectboard, the Town Clerk, the Conservation Commission, and the Fire Department. **B)** Commission members will walk Brushwood trails in April to clear debris and blowdowns. **C)** There was a long discussion about the request from Linda Baccei and Nate Pero that the Commission consider whether there might be a way to use Brushwood Community Forest as a resource for townspeople who cannot afford firewood. Peggy read the note from County Forester David Paganelli on the problems the Commission should be alert to with respect to this matter, namely, liability issues, damage to roads and trails, exacerbation of poaching problems and the need to mark suitable trees. David also proposed a possible solution to the problem, involving hiring a professional logger and delivering firewood to the homes of those needing. It was moved seconded and passed unanimously that the Commission will write to Linda Baccei and Nate Pero, outlining the problems indicated by the County Forester and the possible solution he suggests and asking them how they would like to proceed.

5. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:10.