

# Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC)

Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2020

## Opening

The regular meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC) was called to order at 7:05 pm on November 2, 2020 via Zoom by Fra DeVine.

## Present

Annette Lynch, Fra DeVine, Peter Smith, Philippe Crane, Philip Leonard, Fred Garrow, Jim Corven.  
Guests: Andy Tanger. Invited: Rich Clark, Willow Hogan (Castleton University)

## Approval of Agenda

The agenda was accepted by consensus.

## Approval of Minutes

F. DeVine moved to accept the minutes, seconded by P. Leonard, approved unanimously.

F. DeVine informed the members that he is interested in conducting a **town survey** of community interests, issues, and concerns that could help guide the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Select Board in its work. Dr. Rich Clark and Willow Hogan of Castleton Polling Institute were invited to join our meeting so they can describe their public survey program and to learn about our interests in their services. R. Clark described their capabilities, experience (they do Vermont Public Radio and PBS polling) and explained a couple of possible methods including surveys by mail, online, or a combination. Each method has its own advantages and time requirements. He further explained that the timing should coincide with their academic calendar (Feb. – May) so students could participate in survey design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. MHCC could prepare our working agreement and general approach before February. He also explained that there would be no cost to the town except for possible administrative items such as printing, postage, etc.

F. DeVine moved that the MHCC form a **committee** to discuss and organize the specifics of a town survey. Motion was seconded by P. Crane and passed unanimously. F. DeVine named a committee of Peter Smith, Jim Corven, and Fra DeVine, to which all agreed.

## Open Issues

All members had received a draft of proposed **Policies & Procedures** for the MHCC prepared by P. Smith. Comments submitted by P. Crane were incorporated into the draft and the document was discussed. J. Corven suggested that more detail was needed regarding the requirements of the Clerk in submitting minutes and agendas. A. Lynch and J. Corven felt the mission statement needed to be re-worded. It was agreed that A. Lynch would re-write the document to incorporate various suggestions and the document would be re-considered.

## **New Business**

F. DeVine suggested that the MHCC have **co-chairs** and named P. Crane as his recommendation. P. Smith made a supportive motion, seconded by A. Lynch, passed unanimously.

J. Corven informed the MHCC that Prof. Robert Rak, a water technology engineer at Bristol Community College, had offer several useful recommendations to help understand the water quality issues of **Star Lake**. He suggested a couple methods to help determine factors that may be driving the water eutrophication. J. Corven suggested that we watch the Lake Champlain Lake Basin Program for upcoming RFPs for field research grants and that the Star Lake working group communicate further with R. Rak.

A. Lynch provided an update on the pending **Municipal Planning Grant** (MPG) proposal for Mount Holly. Their response is due in early December and the project would be the responsibility of the MHCC. P. Crane moved & F. DeVine seconded a motion to form a planning committee to prepare for the grant should it be awarded. A. Lynch, P. Leonard, and F. Garrow were named to this committee.

J. Corven reported that the Lake Champlain Basin Program RFP releases that were due out in late October had not yet be published as of November 2. He will continue to monitor their announcements and has made direct inquiries to the Program office.

F. DeVine again described the **organizational support** offered by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department through Jens Hilke and asked members to indicate their preferred availabilities for a weekday presentation (online/Zoom) using a Doodle that will be re-sent.

## **Action Items**

- Revise the draft mission statement for review by the MHCC. (A. Lynch)
- Draft a proposal for the town survey to be conducted with Castleton Univ. (committee)
- Report field research support possibilities to the Star Lake working group. (J. Corven)
- Develop a plan for implementation of the MPG (committee)
- Schedule best date & time for a presentation by Jens Hilke. (F. DeVine)
- Track & report on the Champlain Lake Basin Program call for proposals. (J. Corven)

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of MHCC will be on Tuesday, December 1 at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The agenda will be provided by F. DeVine/P. Crane.

## **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned by F. DeVine at 8:09pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Jim Corven, acting clerk.