

Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC)

Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2020

Opening

The regular meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC) was called to order at 7:01 pm on December 1, 2020 via Zoom by Fra DeVine.

Present

Annette Lynch, Fra DeVine, Peter Smith, Nicole Lewis, Philippe Crane, Philip Leonard, Mark Zelis, Fred Garrow, Jim Corven. Guests: Jon McCann, Stephen Michel.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was accepted by consensus.

Approval of Minutes

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

F. DeVine opened with the continuing discussion of the draft MHCC **Mission Statement and Policy & Procedures**. A revision was prepared and circulated by A. Lynch for comments. F. DeVine had incorporated most suggestions. He also presented a suggested revision by Peter Smith. P. Smith explained his preference for a broader, more detailed statement as was done by some other towns. N. Lewis and P. Crane suggested including a statement offered by Jens Hilke (VT Fish & Wildlife) during a training session earlier in the day that the Commission is to represent the interests of the town and is not an advocate for any particular interest. A. Lynch and J. Corven advocated for a much shorter, concise Mission Statement followed by the details of functions and operations. P. Crane moved to accept the final revision with possibilities for future revisions, seconded by A. Lynch. A. Lynch asked about the disposal of remaining funds if the Commission were to be dissolved in the future and offered to investigate the legal requirements. The motion was passed unanimously with a clear understanding that there may be future revisions needed.

Open Issues

A. Lynch provided a detailed update from the **Grants sub-committee** regarding preparations for the possible Municipal Planning Grant decisions expected in December. They have reviewed the Arrowwood Natural Heritage Element Inventory and Assessment report to identify which areas need updating and new topics that could be studied. They also reviewed online resources that can be used, including BioFinder (<https://anr.vermont.gov/maps/biofinder>) and the Vermont Atlas of Natural Resources (<https://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra5/>). It was noted that there have been several online trainings by the Agency for Natural Resources and on YouTube to help new users of these websites.

F. Devine reported that the **Survey sub-committee** has developed a draft list of possible questions for the town survey to be conducted with Castleton University next year. Revisions are still underway and a final draft will be circulated to the commission for review when ready.

M. Zelis of the **Star Lake sub-committee** reported that he has been reviewing information for funding of field studies from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and recommendations of water quality considerations provided by Prof. Robert Rak at Bristol Community College, MA. J. Corven suggested that funding for field monitoring may be available from the VT Watershed Grants program and proposals are due in mid-January.

New Business

No new business was considered.

Action Items

- Investigate the legal requirements for final disposal of Commission funds. (A. Lynch)
- Review & revise questions for the town survey. (F. Devine & Survey sub-committee)
- Prepare field research support possibilities to the Star Lake. (M. Zelis & sub-committee)
- Prepare for implementation of the MPG, if awarded. (A. Lynch & MPG sub-committee)
- Investigate the VT ANR Watershed Grants call for proposals. (J. Corven)

Next Meeting

The next meeting of MHCC will be on Tuesday, January 5 at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The agenda will be provided by F. DeVine/P. Crane.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by F. DeVine at 7:55 pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Jim Corven, acting clerk.