

Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 9, 2021, Town Office

Present: Bruce Hunter, Jerry Bley, Tim Sniffen, Greg Durgin, Greg Leimbach, Andy Walsh, Marty Hanish, Bob Mohlar

Excused: Brent West, Stephanie Donaldson

RCC Meeting Minutes - A motion was made by Greg D. and seconded by Bruce H. to approve the January 12, 2020 meeting minutes as amended; unanimously approved by RCC members.

New Business

Town Social Events – Greg L. suggested that RCC be more involved in town social events, such as Heritage Days. The group discussed organizing 1 or 2 events per year. Ideas include leading a walk at the Fairgrounds interpreting the pulling stones or an interpretive walk on one of the town properties. Greg L. will contact other committee chairs to gauge interest in participating in other events.

Invasive plant Management Program – Bruce H. notified the group of a 3-day training on invasive plant identification, mapping, and control by Maine Forest Service and Maine Natural Areas Program on May 19, 20, and 25. Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation District and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension will host a 1-day workshop on the ecology, impacts, identification and management of invasive plants on May 2 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Since town conservation plans (e.g., Town Forest) include recommendations for invasive plant control, it was suggested that someone in the group attend.

Fairgrounds Feasibility Study for New Ball Fields – The Recreation Committee is looking to fund a feasibility study for a new ball field at the Fairgrounds. The Select Board has indicated that no town funds will be used to build the new ball field (the existing ball field was built with donated money).

Old Business

Maine Farmland Trust Training – Jerry B. had not heard back from MFT on the proposed training; will try to schedule for the March meeting.

Farmland Protection in Readfield – Greg L. spoke with Steve Christianson, owner of Christianson Farm LLC, in Readfield, regarding promoting farming in town. Mr. Christianson recommended assisting existing farmers in town with financial incentives. Monmouth provides a tax abatement for farmers. Jerry B. suggested that RCC support a tax abatement recommendation, if proposed, in the Comprehensive Plan update. Other ideas mentioned included **agricultural zoning, mapping of agricultural land**, etc. Greg L. indicated that RCC needs to provide a

coherent position on this issue to the committee. Greg D. will forward RCC finding/recommendations (when ready) to the Comp Plan committee.

Comprehensive Plan Revisions - Greg D. gave an update of the second Comp Plan committee meeting. The committee is using a 3-prong approach, including data collection **through censusing**, soliciting input from the town, and making recommendations that will be submitted for approval by the Select Board. Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) will guide the planning process, which will take 1.5-2 years.

Firearms ordinance – RCC will provide input based on past discussions if the Select Board takes the issue up.

Town Forest Invasive Management Plan – Tim S. will look at the RTF management plan regarding invasive plant management goals and report back at the next meeting.

Age Friendly Committee Grant, Fairgrounds Trails – Jerry B. indicated that the trail improvement grant has been submitted; no decision is expected until April.

GAUD Carleton Pond Property – A trail agreement between GAUD and the town of Readfield (**Winthrop?**) has been finalized and approved by Eric Dyer that gives permission for trail building and construction of a kiosk. Trail building will begin on the east side of the property. The main gate and parking will be located to a safe location (**not Rt. 17?**). Rob Peale is leading the effort.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.
Submitted by Andy Walsh on March 8, 2021