

**Readfield Conservation Commission Minutes**  
**Tues, Dec. 13, 2016, 6:30 pm, Town Office, Approved 1/10/17**

Present: Jerry Bley, Bruce Hunter, Tim Sniffen, Andy Walsh

Not present: Greg Durgin, Martin Hanish, Bob Mohlar, Beth Pritchard

Minutes of November RCC meeting were corrected and approved.

**Old Business:**

Mill Stream Dam Project –

Jerry reported that the Select Board approved the Mill Stream Easement and Agreement with Robert and Helen Bittar. The documents will be held in escrow until the overall project is in place, but having them done will allow Jerry to file for DEP permitting.

Vernal Pool Inventory –

Bruce reported that he may be able to oversee the ongoing wrap-up process after he retires in 2017.

The Select Board has asked that reports and presentations of our findings be made to the Planning Board, landowners, and general public when results are final.

**New Business:**

Budget for fiscal Year 2017-18 –

Bruce reviewed the budget procedure and carry-over policy for the RCC funds as explained by Teresa Shaw. Tim reported that although budgeted funds may carry over to a future year, they can only be used as originally approved by voters in a Town Meeting vote.

Spending for next year was discussed, and a proposed budget was assembled and approved. Bruce will present it to the Budget Committee at their meeting Jan 4. Aside from routine items, main expenditures involve the vernal pool inventory and the trail infrastructure replacement project. We did not include funds for repair of the Town Forest lane because that work could be part of the next harvest (2018), and thus done by the logging company.

Trail Infrastructure project discussion: We are optimistic about receiving a Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant to cover most of the project cost, and think we should apply by the Sept, 2017, deadline. It would help our application if matching funds were already approved. To help us estimate matching fund amount, Steve Spencer (Big Pine Consulting) agreed to meet with us on 12/28/16 to give us his cost estimates of the overall project. If his estimate was \$30K, then we should budget \$6K as matching funds. Using this estimated amount, our budget would total \$7580, not including trail signs. This amount will be revised after the 12/28/16 meeting.

Joint Trail Committee/ Conservation Commission RTP grant –

Trails Committee is looking into building a trail in the Readfield Water District parcel, and is considering applying for a RTP grant if the Water District Committee agrees and provides easements, etc. We discussed coordinating with the TC and applying for one joint RTP grant. We will invite the TC to our meeting 12/28, to further discuss this possibility and how it might fit into our budgets for next year.

Tim will check with T.O. about a special meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and will invite Eric Dyer, Town Manager to attend.

Meeting was adjourned approx 8:15.

**Special Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting  
Weds, Dec 28, 2016, 6:30 pm, Town Office, Approved 1/10/17**

Present: Jerry Bley, Greg Durgin, Bruce Hunter, Tim Sniffen, Andy Walsh

Not present: Martin Hanish, Bob Mohlar, Beth Pritchard

Visitors: Steve Spencer, Big Pine Consulting, Whitefield, Me; Gary and Ann Keilty, Trails Committee; Eric Dyer, Town Manager.

Steve Spencer provided copies of his 7-page report, “Readfield Conservation Commission Trail Design Work”. Copies are in RCC files.

We discussed his report at length. Steve gave useful trail and bridge-building advice and shared the basis for his estimates which are described in the report. There were questions about techniques of trail-building over wet areas called “turnpike-ing” or ‘ditch-and-drain”. Steve will look for photos showing examples.

We discussed applying for RTP grant covering funding for our trail infrastructure replacement project in coordination with the Trails Committee application for their proposed trail system in the Readfield Water District, which would tie in with the Fairgrounds trails.

At this time, the RCC should apply for \$18K and the TC would apply for \$17K. Matching funds of \$6K would be budgeted from the Readfield Conservation Lands Account for the upcoming fiscal year. We would budget for the balance of the project costs in fiscal year 2018-19, when we know the results of the grant application.

We reviewed our proposed budget with Eric Dyer, Town Manager, who made several suggestions. We omitted several minor items and added the grant match (\$6K) as well as the anticipated funding for the Mill Stream Dam project (\$8300), which is coming from grants, a fundraiser, and perhaps other donations. The resulting RCC budget for 2017-18 of \$16,050 was approved unanimously by the RCC members present. Tim will submit it to Teresa tomorrow, and it will be presented to the Budget Committee by Bruce Hunter on 1/4/17.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 8:45 pm. Submitted by Tim Sniffen, Secretary