

Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Location: Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Auburn, Maine

Time: Meeting began at 3:30 PM

Recording: The meeting was recorded.

Commissioners Present: Evan Cyr, Mary Ann Brenchick, Lee Clements, Amy Landry, Dan Bilodeau, Alan Holbrook and Steve French

Alicia Rea has stepped down as a Commissioner and her term was filled by Lewiston City Council member Lee Clements. Caleb Roebuck recused himself from votes and executive discussions as by Charter the Commission can only have 1 Lewiston City Council member at a time serving on the Commission.

Commissioners Absent: Camille Parrish

Others Present: Sid Hazelton and Kevin Gagne, LAWPC Clerks, Michael Broadbent LAWPC Secretary, Erica Kidd Watershed Manager and Heather Hunter Commission Finance Officer.

Agenda Item 1: Election of Officers

Sid opened the meeting as Commissioner Doughty (Current Chair) has been replaced by Commissioner Brenchick.

Commissioner Brenchick made a nomination for Commissioner French to become the new Chair of the Commission. Following no objection by Commissioner French, Commissioner Landry seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Bilodeau made a nomination for Commissioner Cry to become the new Chair of the Commission. That nomination was seconded by Commissioner Holbrook.

Discussion followed as how to proceed. Commissioner Brenchick asked if the two candidates could give a speech as to why they would make a good Chair and asked if either of the candidates was interested in serving as the Vice Chair if the Chair position was not available.

Vote 1 – On a motion by Commissioner Brenchick and seconded by Commissioner Clements to appoint Steve French the Chair and Evan Cyr the Vice Chair of the Commission.

On a motion by Commissioner Bilodeau and seconded by Commissioner Holbrook to table the nomination of officers to the next meeting.

Motion to table failed 2-5

Passed 3-2-2 (Commissioners French and Cyr abstained from the vote)

Commissioner Brenchick nominated Sid Hazelton and Kevin Gagne remain as Co-Clerks of the Commission. This nomination was seconded by Commissioner Landry.

Vote 2 – On a motion by Commissioner Brenchick and seconded by Commissioner Clements, Sid Hazelton and Kevin Gagne would remain as Co-clerks of the Commission.

Passed 4-3

Vote 3 – On a motion by Commissioner Landry and seconded by Commissioner Brenchick to have Michal Broadbent continue as Commission Secretary.

Passed 7-0

Vote 4 – On a motion by Commissioner Brenchick and seconded by Commissioner Landry to appoint Heather Hunter as Treasurer.

Passed 6-0-1

Agenda Item 3: Approve the minutes of regular meeting of June 9, 2021.

Vote 5 – On a motion by Commissioner Brenchick and seconded by Commissioner Bilodeau with the following corrections: page two, vote two, it is noted that Commissioner Bilodeau abstained from the vote. Page 3 agenda item eight, correct the spelling of by-laws.

Passed 6-0-1

Agenda Item 3: Executive Session regarding potential litigation in accordance with 1 M.S.R.A. § 405 (6) (E).

Vote 5 – On a motion by Commissioner Cyr and seconded by Commissioner Bilodeau to go into Executive Session for consultation with legal counsel concerning legal rights and duties of LAWPC where premature public disclosure would clearly place a party at a disadvantage in accordance with 1 M.S.R.A. § 405 (6) (E).

Passed 6-0-1

Executive session ended at 4:26pm

Vote 6 – On a motion by Commissioner Landry and seconded by Commissioner Brenchick to authorize Jim Pross to work with Clerk Kevin Gagne, Watershed Manager Erica Kidd and Commissioner Evan Cyr to provide a response to a request for information from a State Agency.

Passed 6-0-1 (Commissioner Bilodeau recused himself from the vote)

Agenda Item 4: City of Auburn Proposed Zoning Map Amendment- Erica Kidd/Eric Cousens

Erica handed out a memo that is addressed to the Auburn Planning Board regarding a proposed amendment to the low-density country residential and rural residential strips abutting the agricultural and resource protection zones in Auburn. Eric Cousens was present at the meeting to go over the proposed amendment and how it will affect the resource protection zone around Lake Auburn. These changes could increase the buildable area within the watershed.

This information will be discussed at a Public Hearing in the coming weeks.

Agenda Item 5: City Parks and Recreation Trail Proposal

Will Libby who is a trail builder for the City of Auburn Recreation Department presented a plan to develop trails on City owned property at the Tot Lot. The City property is not big enough to accomplish all of the goals of the City. This lot abuts watershed land and they would like to know if the Commission would consider allowing a multi-use trail that would run parallel to Townsend Brook to Lake Shore Drive. The Trail would outlet next to the entrance to the salmon point trail. A parking area will be created at the Tot Lot.

The Commissioners were excited about the plan but want to make sure that parking and proper facilities were in place before proceeding.

Vote 7 – On a motion by Commissioner Bilodeau and seconded by Commissioner Brenchick to approve the Tot Lot Rd trail as presented with considerations for porta-potties and parking to be brought back to the Commissioners at a later date.

Passed 7-0

Agenda Item 6: Quarterly Financial Update – Heather Hunter

The quarterly financial packets were included with the Commission Agenda. Heather reported that expenditures are looking healthy, legal fees are up slightly while education is down. The Commission is currently operating with a surplus.

Vote 8 – On a motion by Commissioner Landry and seconded by Commissioner Cyr to accept the financial report as presented.

Passed 7-0

Agenda Item 7: Water Quality Update and Activity Report. – Erica Kidd

Erica went over several graphs that were included in the Commissioner packet. Erica went over temperature and turbidity graphs. In addition, she went over results of Phosphorus sampling from within the lake and around the watershed. Overall, 2021 has been a good water quality year to this point. The coming months will be telling.

Erica reported that she will be conducting interviews to fill the Education and Outreach Coordinator position. She hopes to have this position filled this Fall.

Erica reported that boat inspections have wrapped up as of Labor Day. Watershed patrols conducted by the Auburn Police department have also wrapped up for the year.

Erica reported that she has been working on a remediation plan for First Brook. She is also working with Lewiston Public Works on improvements scheduled for Spring Rd.

Erica reported that she and Chris Curtis (Treatment/Lab Director) were asked to join the Outlet Beach working group to better understand water quality within the outlet. The City would like to re-develop this area and re-open to swimming.

Erica received a request to install a memorial bench off Lakeshore Drive on Commission property. This memorial bench would be installed by friend of a lady who recently passed away who frequented this area. The Commissioners asked Erica to review where the bench could be installed and how many we would want on Commission property in total within this area. The Commissioners did not object to proceeding with the bench.

Erica reported that there was a horse farm that is currently being developed on West Auburn Rd. There is a public meeting tonight to take in public comment on the development. They hope to have a riding range and area for lessons. This parcel is within the Lake Auburn Watershed and will need Planning Board approval.

Agenda Item 10: Request from the Perkins Ridge Snow Travelers (P.R.S.T.) to bypass the Middle and South Gates on Whitman Spring Rd.

Brenda Benner was present at the meeting to discuss the draft agreement between the Commission and the P.R.S.T. This draft agreement was developed by staff and is similar to other Commission agreements.

Vote 9 – On a motion by Commissioner Cyr and seconded by Commissioner Holbrook to execute the agreement with the P.R.S.T.

Passed 6-0-1 Commissioner Bilodeau abstained from the vote.

Agenda Item 9: 2022 Budget Consideration

Sid explained this Item was on the agenda to give the Commissioners a heads up that staff will be developing the 2022 budget and that the draft budget would be posted on the Commission website in October for public comment.

Agenda Item 8: Land Negotiation- Executive session regarding negotiations of potential land transactions in accordance with 1 M.S.R.A. § 405(6)(C).

Vote 10 – On a motion by Commissioner Brenchick and seconded by Commissioner Landry to go into executive session in accordance with 1 M.S.R.A. § 405(6)(C).

Passed 7-0-0

The meeting came out of executive session at 6:32pm

Agenda Item 11: Consideration for future workshops

Commissioner Brenchick recommended that we have a workshop to clarify Commission protocol. All of the Commissioners agreed that this is overdue and they agreed to have a workshop on December 1, 2021.

Agenda Item 12: Open Session – Public comments

Former Commissioner Roebuck explained why he had recused himself from Commission discussions. He was recently appointed to the Lewiston City Council at the same time Commissioner Clements was appointed to fill in for Commissioner Rea who had recently stepped down for personal reasons. By Charter there can only be one Lewiston City Council member on the Commission at any one time. He recused himself to avoid potential conflict.

Agenda Item 13: Open Session for Commissioners

Commissioner Cyr discussed an e-mail that he had recently sent to all of the Commissioners. The e-mail requested that they agree to direct a Commission Clerk to reach out to the State of Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) and request clarification on whether or not swimming in Lake Auburn would jeopardize the filtration waiver. Kevin Gagne explained there are actually two waivers to consider here and that he had reached out to DWP and had received an e-mail reply from them regarding this concern. Kevin will review his correspondence and share that with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Bilodeau reported that the Protection of Lake Auburn Committee was re-activated to review the Protection of Lake Auburn By-laws. This committee is currently made up of two Auburn Water District Trustees who have been tasked with reviewing the by-laws. Dan requested participation from at least two watershed Commissioners to assist with the review and reported that the next meeting is October 13, 2021.

Agenda Item 14: Adjourn Meeting

Vote 11 – On a motion by Commissioner Clements and seconded by Commissioner Cyr to adjourn the meeting.

Passed 7-0-0

A true record, attest;



Michael Broadbent
Secretary of the LAWPC