

## **RICHMOND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

January 14, 2020, 7:30pm

**Members present:** Judy Rosovsky, Elizabeth Wright, Bob Low, Max Krieger, Caitlin Littlefield, Jack Linn

**Members of the public present:** none

**Motion to approve December 10, 2019 meeting minutes**

- Discussion: none
- Approved by unanimous vote 6-0

**Backlog of minutes in 2018**

- One option: just list as unapproved on website
- Alternative option: work through unapproved
- Judy to check with Josh about process

**Update on Lake Iroquois (Jack)**

- Hinesburg, Williston, Richmond (though largely unknown by Richmond residents)
- Water flows N-S; Lake Sunset on receiving end of broken-up milfoil
- General health
  - On the good side: 2019 first year with loons nesting in long time; plant survey indicates decent species richness
  - On the bad side: milfoil increasing in prevalence.
    - 23% of places tested in 2017
    - 42% of places tested in 2019
    - ~70 acres reported to support dense growth in 2017 to 100 in 2019
- 3 organizations
  - 7 private roads
  - Lake Iroquois Recreation District has 150 acres on N. side Beebe Lane with 3.25 km hiking trails plus beach access
    - Grant for remediation of surface water run-off off Beebe Lane.
    - Going up for \$300,000 to improve Beebe Lane
  - Lake Iroquois Association
    - Deal with water quality and testing
    - Continually done at inflow of all streams
    - Aquatic surveys, invasive surveys
      - Currently: Eurasian water milfoil and curly leaf pond weed
    - Education on proper septic and shoreline management
    - Own and operate hot water pressure boat wash station at state boat wash
      - Only have \$\$ to operate on weekend
    - Question of whether state F&W will take over control
    - Currently updating website
- Options for milfoil
  - Diver Assisted Suction (DAS) - \$6000 to do 1 acre
  - Benthic blankets to suppress growth: kills natives, too

- Approved for target-specific chemical ProcellaCOR: not whole-lake application but 40% of effective lake.
- Sonar (chemical) use permit denied – much to LIA's chagrin
- Let property values tank...
- Jack to write article for Times Inc.

### **Jonnie Brook bridge and boardwalk damage (Max)**

- Nearest Farr Farm, river has washed out boardwalk
- Bridge itself towards Chamberlain trails, at least one side down
- Original trail/bridge built because class 4 road (Farr on either side)
- Rebuild or re-route or at least culvert?
  - Would have to deal with private owner access if beyond class 4 road
  - Chuck Farr requested notification if Cross-VT or other road work (Greg Western) involves staging on his land; wants to be looped in
  - \$\$\$
- Judy will convene meeting of Richmond Trails Committee, Richmond Mountain Trails, Greg Western, rec committee, Chuck Farr, etc. together and will check with town about this first.

### **Conservation Reserve Fund**

- We applied for 5 year renewal
  - Josh went to town lawyer who said OK, VT League of Cities and Towns said no, can't do it (Bob Fletcher)
- Funding now annually due to state-level
  - Town cannot encumber future residents for multi-year increases in taxes
- Language for town ballot simplified
- Need public information meeting
- Night before town meeting, we will be asked to present something
- Need to confirm if *at* town meeting there can be a brief summary
- Group reviewed text and table to go into ballot
  - Edits include
    - See Bob's re-write
    - More descriptive language in projects
    - Re-order projects so that most recent ones are first
- Note we must review CRF applications in light of Conservation Commission's scope; we may then recommend to Selectboard
  - Selectboard may overrule
  - E.g., \$20k to riprap was approved by us in part because we didn't want to be overruled by Selectboard and set an unfortunate precedent

### **Use Value Appraisal (Caitlin)**

- New proposal to include conserved lands within program

- Caitlin explains why she's concerned about this
- RCC ought to be aware of this conversation to help convey nuance of program and potential implications of hands-off forest management in this era.

### **Emerald Ash Borer**

- Richmond needs an EAB preparedness plan
- Roadside inventory of ash tree
  - On town roads
  - Tally, size class
  - ID areas at risk to start creating a fund for it
  - Get priority list for hazard trees
- Forest management different than town management
  - Safety concerns on roadways
- Who cuts them down?
  - Town
  - Utilities
    - Surcharge noted on bills
    - Cannot take down all ash along right-of-ways (because it's too fast), only on side where lines are
  - Alert landowners
- USDA had been paying for Barney boxes (purple sticky traps for emerald ash borer monitoring)
  - Federal quarantine had encompassed 35 states
  - According to federal law, can move ash anywhere within 35 (VT has ash movement recommendations and a no moving pests law)
  - Once deregulation happens, there will be 35 states with 35 different sets of rules
  - How will borders be monitored without Federal presence?
- Caitlin and Bob will take lead on identifying methodologies for inventorying town roads
- Gather volunteers for info-session and deploy the troops – April meeting?