

**OFFICIAL MINUTES: Business Meeting  
Eliot Conservation Commission  
Eliot, Maine 03903**

**DATE: November 4, 2020**

**OFFICERS:**

**Chair: Kari Moore**

**Vice Chair: Christina Karas**

**Secretary: Lynn Bubley**

**Treasurer: Alice Lynch**

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY ONLINE. THE CALL-IN INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC WAS PROVIDED BY the Town PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MEETING.

**1. Call:**

The meeting was called to order with roll call at 6:32PM by Kari Moore. In attendance: Kari Moore (Chair), Christina Karas, (Vice Chair), Alice Lynch (Treasurer), Lisa Wise (Member), Lynn Bubley (Secretary), Tomas Dundzila (Public), Jeff Brubaker (Town Planner.), Melissa Albert

**2. Review and approve past minutes:**

Meeting minutes from October 2020 were reviewed, changes made, and accepted unanimously at this time.

**3. Public Input:** No public input at this meeting.

**4. Financial Report/ Budget:**

No expenditures noted for the month. Alice has nothing to report. The next budget for the year July 2021-June 2022 is due. Numbers are due November 23, 2020. Other than the Land Bank money, funds spent do not roll over to the following fiscal year. For the next budget: we would like to request: \$500 for education, \$300 for dues and subscriptions, \$300 for copy, postage, and supplies, \$150 for guest speaker, \$270 for Johnson Road maintenance, \$15,000 for the Land Bank. The Commission voted unanimously to present this budget request. We have not spent much this year because of Covid-19 restrictions on public events. Christina Karas provided an update on the 319 Grant process for Spinney Creek. A watershed-based plan will need to be prepared by a consultant. Funding will be required. We can check with Kristy Rabasca, and the Kittery Conservation Commission, who might have a plan that we can tap into. The State has money set aside for these efforts, but we need to match the amount. As part of the plan, we need to identify what the contaminants are. The MS4 (Municipal Storm Water Sewer

Separation System) plan that was completed might have a watershed plan that could be used. Need to find out if Kittery would be interested in partnering with us if they could also use the information. Christina Karas is willing to investigate this. The MS4 permit is good for 5-10 years. Other expenses for this year could cover trail maps and trail signs for local trails in Eliot. Possibly a map that shows conservation land in Eliot. Currently there is a map of conservation areas available through Gateway to Maine Outside, Mt. A to the Sea. Landbank can be used to fund certain activities.

## **5. Discussion with Town Planner Jeff Brubaker:**

Kari introduced Jeff to the group. Jeff has been with the town of Eliot for 3 months. Jeff holds a master's degree in city/ regional planning, mostly transportation planning from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His focus now is Land Use planning. Jeff spoke to us about development review including the application review process. We explained that there was at times a lag in getting information with the previous town planner because the position was part time.

Conversation was had on the Rt 236 Sewer Expansion project and the TIF bond which did pass, as it pertains to impact on natural resources.

Kari questioned intent of "Wetland Exchange" included in the TIF plan as potential mitigation tool. Is this allowed under Maine regulations? Jeff will investigate this and get back to us. How are we able to get a look at the TIF plans? The plans are at 70% design and the consultant has not gone any further. Kari Moore will reach out to the TIF group for more information regarding changes to the wetlands. Commission is concern if this could have an impact on Sturgeon Creek watershed GWRLT has concerns about pressure on that land.

Another topic discussed was Sweet Dirt's potential expansion, specifically the 2 parcels that they are interested in purchasing. Kari Moore and Alice Lynch went to tour the Sweet Dirt facility. They looked at the footprint and how they wanted to expand. The 2 parcels are currently owned by the town and currently limit development of recreational marijuana facility at 7 McLellan. Sturgeon Creek runs through the land with a significant amount of associated wetland habitat. There is a restriction on building within 500' of public land and Conservation Commission was reluctant to sell or develop this land because of the proximity to public land. Sweet Dirt has offered to put Conservation Easements on the parcels. Conservation Commission was not aware of this until recently. The Easement potential could change how we proceed as the easements placed on lands remain in effect. We will need to approach Dana about this issue. We need to be cautious about selling this land because we are unsure who will purchase this. Could we also ask the purchaser to also put money in the Land Bank? Is it up to the Conservation Commission? Select Board will be meeting on 11/12/20 and the potential sale of these parcels

will be presented. How can we be sure the land will be protected? Jeff suggests deferring to Dana. We will need some process to sequence the sale and make sure the easement gets inserted so that it cannot ever get re-sold without the easement. Alice Lynch suggests adding this language into the deed. Lisa Wise suggests talking to the people at GWRLT and ask them about the different types of protection for this land. Kari Moore will Contact Jill Crosbie, stewardship coordinator for Great Works Regional Land Trust, about information. Christina Karas asks about money going into the land bank. Also, are we getting information about parcels late or at the last minute? Other planning topics discussion with Jeff included the Comprehensive Plan- Are we ready for a new one in 2021? It has been 10 years since our previous one. SMPDC- Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission. Our Open Space Plan is also 10 years old. Can we fold the Open Space Plan into the new Comprehensive Plan? Jeff indicated that the Conservation Commission would be involved with the updated of the Comprehensive Plan. Jeff also indicated that his intent is to continue to maintain open communication with the Conservation Commission.

## **6. Education/ Outreach:**

- Invasive species- put on hold for next meeting
- Sunday November 8 at 2 PM, Great Works Regional Land Trust will have the opening to the Goodwin Farm parcel. Eliot Conservation Commission was part of getting that land. This parcel of land attaches to the town forest parcel at Johnson Lane.

## **7. Town Forest and Compatible Use:**

- We have had our Forest Management plan for over 11 years and not much has been done on this plan. We continue to discuss ATV usage on Town Forest land. We would like something that defines the rules of land usage and accessibility. If we are interested in an ordinance, Jeff is willing to assist us in developing rules of behavior for this land. Discussion was also had on Marijuana ordinance as it pertains to licensing and land use, recreational and medicinal. Auto junkyards- there is good state statutory language that now limits auto graveyards. We need restrictions to keep them away from ecological areas. Storm water ordinance- there have been minor changes to that.

## **8. Round Table:**

Lisa Wise reports need to renew our membership of \$150 to Great Works Regional Land Trust and to renew our membership with Maine Association of Conservation Commission (MEACC). Lynn Bublely makes an inquiry about fundraising for Land Bank.

**Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday December 2, 2020 at 6:30 PM**

9. Meeting is adjourned at 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bublely

Secretary

CC: Eliot Town Clerk, Commission Members, Commission File