

ALSTEAD PLANNING BOARD MEETING
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MEETING MINUTES
November 8, 2021

Note: These minutes are furnished for public inspection in accordance with RSA 91-A:2 and are unapproved until offered for disposition by the Board at a regular meeting. **ACCEPTED AS CORRECTED 12/13/21.**

PB Members present via Google Meet (GM) or In-Person (IP): Peter Rhoades/Chairman (GM-surgery recovery), David Konesko (IP), Matt Saxton (IP), Chris Rietmann (GM), Justin Falango (IP), Gordon Kemp (GM) and Joyce Currill/Alternate (GM-could not make it in). Other persons present: Sarah Webb & Donna Sabin/both of the Conservation Commission (CC), and Jeff Littleton/Moosewood Ecological.

At 7:06pm Konesko/Acting Chairman opened the meeting. The 10/11/21 Minutes were reviewed. A Motion (Saxton/Falango) was made to accept them as corrected. Motion passed.

At 7:16PM the Public Hearing for the acceptance of the Alstead Wetlands Comparative Evaluation, as part of the Town's Master Plan, was opened. Webb/CC gave a brief overview of this project, which began in 2017; she explained the wetlands to be evaluated needed to be identified (prominent wetlands over 1-acre in size) and the landowners contacted to gain permission to go onto their land; 2 presentations took place at the Town library, and were well attended; they had a goal of involving the community to celebrate the conclusions found. Littleton already gave a presentation to all Town Select Board Members, the CC and the landowners in March 2020.

Webb further explained that the CC wants to continue with this wetlands project, to identify prime wetlands, in the future. Littleton explained that there are a variety of wetlands prominent in Alstead, and the data to be gathered is based on NH's wetlands assessment model (there are 12 different values), which include flood control, ground water protection, wildlife habitats, etc.

Littleton stated that wetlands have a lot of value. The CC wants to really understand what wetlands are the most significant based on certain values – and the data has already been collected. Saxton asked how many wetlands were identified and looked at. Littleton responded that he was not granted access to all the wetlands that were identified – but did collect some information from satellite imagery and roadside observation, if relevant. He did not enter any land without first gaining approval/permission from the landowner. Kemp stated it looked like 138 wetlands were identified, in accordance to information in the report. Falango asked how the list of wetlands was compiled. Littleton stated he first used the National Wetlands Inventory (by US Fish and Wildlife Service), then he looked at aerial photography. Falango asked if Littleton's report gave recommendations – Littleton said some were given, but this is a two-step process.

Rietmann asked if there was an online source that a landowner could look at to determine if they have a wetlands on their property. Littleton suggested to use the aforementioned National Wetlands Inventory. Kemp asked if Littleton's data was in GIS data format – Littleton stated it was. Kemp stated he would like to add this data to the new program the Town is using – *Littleton to provide the data. Rhoades stated he felt the biggest wetlands are in areas not accessible by the road, nor affected by development, and are quite remote – Littleton agreed.

Webb stated that logging and clear cutting can be a threat to certain wetlands; an example was the start of a problem on Camp Brook Road. Littleton also stated that logging can create a new wetlands area – as trees typically take up a lot of the water. Saxton asked if a wetland can lower the value of a parcel/property? Littleton stated that

when a wetland is recognized as being significant to the community, DES becomes aware, and it helps with their awareness of work being done in neighboring areas. Webb stated this information can help a landowner to decide if they feel it is worth protecting or putting their land in conservation.

Rietmann stated he had a 2-acre beaver pond on his land, but had not been contacted. Littleton stated that he had limited time, and his wetland may not have been chosen to be viewed/studied.

Rhoades stated he read the report and found it to be useful information, and he was in favor of adopting it as part of the Town's Master Plan. Kemp asked the CC Members present what the next step was – Webb responded to designate prime wetlands, those of which are determined to be the highest value to the Town; and a survey needs to be done. Kemp asked if this step will be more of a legal status – Webb stated it was. Littleton stated this step involves a Town vote, and that the NH DES can help explain and present information.

A Motion (Saxton/Rhoades) was made to accept the Alstead Wetlands Comparative Evaluation as part of the Town's Master Plan. Motion passed, with all but Kemp in favor. Kemp did go on record as to wanting this GIS information to be an overlay on our Town maps.

Old Business: no knew information from the Surveyor (Tom Smith) about the matter of the Town Pound; the Lyman structure violation on Griffin Hill Road has been remedied; Glenn Elsesser is working on the CIP and is meeting with Department Heads at the next Select Board meeting (the following night).

A Motion (Kemp/Falango) was made to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. The Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melanie Marsden/Admin. Assistant