

Poland Conservation Commission

Town of Poland
1231 Maine St.
Poland, Maine 04274

Meeting Minutes, September 8, 2021

Members Present: Barry Morgan(co-chairperson), Fred Huntress(co-Chairperson), Donald Stover (Secretary), John Young, (Treasurer), Fred Morton, Ray Stillman.

Meeting called to order at 7 pm by Chairman Morgan.

Minutes of August meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Young reported an Operating Fund balance of \$18308.78 and Reserve Fund balance of \$5297.73. The sale of Sadie Jackson property has been completed and full proceeds will soon be deposited in Conservation Operating Fund.

Master Trail Plan: This discussion was tabled because Alan Audet, Trail Master, was not able to attend.

Conservation Plans for Waterhouse Park and Map 10, Lot 54 were presented to the Selectboard on August 17 and to public hearing on September 7. Plans were well received by Selectboard on both occasions. Only Conservation members appeared at the hearing. It was noted that ATV Club has been given until May 2022 to develop their proposed use of railroad bed in Waterhouse Park and potential trail crossing Map 54, Lot 10. So far they have not acted on developing these trails. John Young noted at the hearing that he has learned in communication with Department of Transportation that it is unlikely a trail could be approved to cross the narrow bridge on Poland Corner Rd., Rt. 26 or along causeway between Middle and Lower Range Ponds. Selectboard approved the Plan for Map 10, Lot 54 with provision that they will revisit the recommendation of “no motorized usage” in May 2022. The Plan for Waterhouse Park was approved as presented.

At the present meeting Fred Huntress asked to re-visit the Waterhouse Park Plan provision permitting a limited hunting area. Fred presented a document listing reasons why hunting was a safety and wildlife issue. He would like us to go back to Selectboard immediately to get hunting banned totally. Fred Morton suggested that the issue would be better framed as “discharge of firearms” than “hunting”. Others were uncomfortable about going right back with a change immediately after the plan we had presented was approved. The consensus was that firearms should not be allowed, but we should wait until spring to revisit this issue. However, it was suggested that we encourage the placement of “No Hunting” as well as “No Trespassing” signs around the gravel pit.

Heart of Poland: Barry will be meeting with surveyor to make the necessary corrections.

Town Land Parcels: for evaluation and recommendations to Selectboard for use or disposal. After discussion of several lots, it was decided that Fred and John will review the entire list and report back to the commission in October.

Mike Murphy Memorial: \$800 has been contributed. We shall need \$925 plus an amount for delivery and installation costs.

Heritage Day: Scott will be running a table which among other things will have trail maps and information on the planned Municipal Park. He will also take sign-ups for conservation volunteers and hand out our Invasives brochure.

Annual Budget: will be the main topic at the October meeting. We need to make decisions concerning operating budget needs and capital reserves. Several members expressed concern that the proceeds from sale of Sadie Jackson property not be applied to ongoing operational costs, but be reserved for land purchases, easement costs and major stewardship needs. Barry noted operational needs for the following:

- Invasive plant control
- trail development and maintainance
- bush hogging
- survey work
- new bog bridges
- general repair and maintenance
- local match for grant applications

Meeting adjourned at 8:28pm. The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 7pm in the library.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Stover, Secretary