

Town of Bartlett
Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday May 11, 2021

Meeting held at Gazebo in the park at corner of River St and US Route 302

Commission Members in Attendance: Chairman Chris Fithian, Mike Morin, Jesse Jameson

Others in Attendance: Steve Frackleton

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

Chairman Fithian made a motion to approve the minutes from the 4/13/21 meeting. Mike Morin seconded. Vote: yes.

Fithian welcomed Steve Frackleton, a Bartlett resident interested in filling one of the vacant positions on the Commission. Fithian provided a general overview of the responsibilities of the Commission.

Frackleton stated that he is a resident in Glen and that his daughter also bought property that he maintains across from the Yogi Bear Campground. He said he has served on previous boards and expressed interest in the future of Bartlett. He asked what the Commission has worked on recently and what the Commission's relationship is with other town boards.

Fithian stated that there is room to grow and believes the various boards have the potential to be very helpful to each other. Morin noted his effort to work on getting a fund setup from land use exchange taxes to go towards ongoing projects in the area, such as local beach cleanup/signage.

Frackleton then asked about local taxpayer involvement and interest in the Commission. Morin, Fithian, and Jameson all agreed that this is something we would like to see developed. Jameson noted that there are a few Warrant Articles up for vote at the next Town Meeting pertaining to more open communication and transparency between the various boards and the local community. She added that lack of communication can be a huge roadblock to keeping the community informed about changes that could impact them directly and cited examples. Frackleton and Fithian then discussed the process for Frackleton to join the Commission.

Fithian then stated that the other topics of discussion for the meeting included the SHA Draft Checklist and the proposed development along the river at the Yogi Bear Campground. He said that no progress has been made on the Draft Checklist and that he needed to contact Rich.

Regarding the Campground, he noted trading emails recently with Mark from SHA where Mark indicated a meeting between SHA and the engineering firm for the project, and that they seemed to be meeting DES guidelines. Morin asked if they were trying to extend the deadline for comment, and Fithian said yes. Morin added at this point our comments likely would not change much but would be a record in case something negative happened down the road with the development.

Fithian then brought up the upcoming Town Meeting and the Warrant Articles that would require the town boards to host meetings over Zoom. Morin stated that the idea to make the meetings more accessible to those who could not attend in person was good, but was concerned about the specific reference to Zoom, as there may be better platforms out there that could be considered, and that specifically citing Zoom could be an issue in later years if that is no longer the best option. He said if the wording of the article were amended to drop the specific reference to Zoom, he personally would be in favor. Jameson and Fithian both agreed with this statement, and Fithian wondered if we would be asked our position on the issue as the Conservation Commission at the town meeting. All agreed that we are in favor of more transparency and open communication, that we need to be given the tools to do this, and that if the intent of the article remains the same, but the specific requirement of Zoom is dropped, we would be in favor.

There being no further business, Morin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jameson seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.