TOWN OF HUDSON

Conservation Commission

James Battis, Chairman Nancy Brucker, Selectmen Liaison

12 School Street · Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 · Tel: 603-886-6000 · Fax: 603-816-1291

DATE December 19, 2012

MEETING MINUTES Below is a listing of minutes for the Hudson Conservation Commission. Minutes are not a verbatim record of each meeting, but rather represent a summary of the discussion and actions taken at the meeting. All Conservation Commission meetings are televised live and repeated during the following week on HCTV, cable television channel 22. Official copies of the minutes are available to read and copy at the Town Engineer's Office during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.).

Should you have any questions concerning these minutes or wish to see the original recording, please contact the Town Engineer's Office at 603-886-6008.

A workshop of the Hudson Conservation Commission (HCC) was held in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room of Town Hall.

Members of the Commission present Jim Battis and Ken Dickinson
Members of the Commission absent or excused: Timothy Boland, Patricia Dubay, Nancy Lamoureux, Tim Quinn, Sandra Rumbaugh
Member of Town Staff present: Excused
Board of Selectman Representative present: Nancy Brucker
Seating of Alternates: None

I. Not having a quorum of the members present, the workshop was closed to business by the J Battis. However, the meeting was held to hear a presentation by an invited speaker, Ms Amy Smagula, a Limnologist and the Exotic Species Program Coordinator from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

II. Presentation: "Exotic Aquatic Plants: A Growing Problem in New Hampshire and Close to Home in Robinson and Ottarnic Ponds in Hudson" presented by Amy Smagula, NH DES. (The presentation slides will be made available on the Conservation Commission website.)

- Over 70 New Hampshire water bodies have invasive plant species.
- Species spread primarily by transport on boats and trailers.
- Ottarnic and Robinson Ponds have well established infestations of variable

milfoil and fanwort.

- Plants are problems because they grow rapidly and form monocultures altering habitat and water chemistry.
- Cause decline in property values by between 10 to 20%.
- Expensive to control and difficult to eradicate.
- Ottarnic and Robinson Pond have had herbicide treatments and Diver Assisted Suction Harvester (DASH) operations used in the past to control the invasive species.
- Mild winter of 2011-2012 and warm, sunny summer resulted in ideal growing season throughout the state for both native and invasive species.
- Growth in 2012 has outpaced ability of DASH operations to limit spread.
- Recommend herbicide application using Clipper, a new and very successful formulation.
- In ideal world both Ponds would be treated in spring 2013.
- For 2013, DES could provide up to $17,800 for exotic plant control including herbicide treatment for one pond and DASH operations in both ponds.

III. Questions from the Public

- Q: As Clipper treatment is not optimal against milfoil, does the strategy for Ottarnic Pond assume just a Clipper treatment?
  - DES: The Ottarnic treatment would include Clipper in the spring and a follow-up treatment with 2,4D.
- Q: Is the two year treatment sequence for Clipper still considered optimal?
  - DES: Yes
- Q: What is the impact on native aquatic plants of herbicide treatments?
  - DES: The selection of the herbicide and concentration levels are important and have been studied. There might be some slight impact but at the recommended levels, non-targeted plants should rebound. All recommended herbicides, at the recommended concentrations, have been shown to have no effect on insects and other animals.
- Q: What is the plan for going to the north end of Robinson Pond?
  - DES: Airboats were used the last time to access this area and would be used again as there are both milfoil and fanwort in that area.
- Q: Prior treatments at Robinson Pond needed to maintain concentrations for a period of time. Is this necessary for Clipper?
  - DES: No. Clipper is absorbed much more quickly by the plants and only needs a day or two of contact and can be selectively applied to areas of the water body.
- Selectman Brucker: As we will only be treating one pond, will we be able

to recover the other pond the other pond in a later season?

- DES: Yes, understanding that there will be a bigger footprint the next year and will require more treatment.

- Q: As you are talking about two years of treatment at Robinson Pond, Ottarnic will be three years before it gets treated which could be very bad situation. Would it be viable to treat Robinson one year and Ottarnic the second and to alternate?
  - DES: This has not been found to be efficient. It is hoped that the second year treatment costs at the first pond would be reduced and that additional funding can be found to accelerate the treatment at the second pond. Cross contamination is an issue and we have data to show that these ponds due have significant potential for infecting other ponds due to boat traffic.
- Q: Does the existence of both species in our ponds contribute to the difficulty of control?
  - DES: Absolutely. You have to deal with both of them and it is difficult, long term and expensive.
- Q: Does the Ottarnic algae growth complicate treatment?
  - DES: Yes, it restricts diver's visibility and complicates treatment. Early season diving is critical although divers can also get in after the algae subside.
- Q: How does the state and the town interface with one another?
  - DES: The DES is in contact with the lake associations for both ponds and has developed long term management plans for both water bodies. These plans are dynamic and need to be shared with the town. Bidding is reviewed by the state and recommendations provided to the lake associations and they should be shared with the town.
- Q: Is the state funding at a 40% level already established?
  - DES: Funding support is determined by DES. All the grant requests throughout the state come to me as do the bids. I review the bids and available funds and try to cover as many projects as possible while still providing a usable percentage. Last year I was able to provide 50% funding but this year we had to drop down to 40% funding.
  - J Battis: The Lake Associations then come to the Conservation Commission with their plans and we establish a funding request in our budget which is then submitted to the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee. This has already happened and the level of funding approved by these groups will go forward to the Town Meeting. There are other sources of funds: donation funds, the Conservation Fund derived from 50% of the annual Land Use Change tax. Without speaking for the Commission, I will state that members of the commission have expressed reluctance to use these funds for maintenance functions based on the establishing warrant article

wording. Our budget for Pond Reclamation is $27,300 this year.

- Q: Giving credit and recognition to DES's support in the past, has not DES expended a significantly greater share of funds on Hudson Ponds due to their potential for a point source contaminant from the ponds?
  - DES: We do have a priority ranking matrix and the criteria of a source for contamination do increase your ratings.
- Q: Would there be any benefit to 100% funding for a single pond for two years and moving on to the next pond after the problem is controlled in the first pond?
  - DES: We do have a separate pot of money for research work and we do pull aside a couple projects each year. So we do analyze the procedures and techniques already. My concern with your procedure is that it allows increasing growth in the untreated ponds and all the ponds in the long-term management plan have seen reduced growth. Some slipped last year but others did not. We are trying to do a more scientific process at control.
- N Brucker: Are the funds just from the state or are there federal funds?
  - DES: There is very little funding from the Federal government. The money for the exotic species control come from the state boat registration fees and about 70% of the collected funds are sent out as grants.
- Q: What would the cost before each pond to be treated:
  - DES: In 2013 Robinson Pond would cost $28,500 with Clipper and Ottarnic would cost $22,350. Understanding that you could probably only do one pond, I provided 40% funding for the highest cost with the stipulation that remaining funds could be used for control in either pond.
- Q: Assuming Robinson Pond is done first, the recommendation would be for divers to come in and work on the inlet in Ottarnic Pond?
  - DES: Yes, that is what I am recommending.
  - J Battis: One of the complexities in the budgeting process is that the town fiscal years ends mid-summer, ending 30 June and the new year starting 1 July. Our budget from last year will cover the spring treatments and our next budget will cover the summer and next spring's treatments. As Amy stated, the town has the contracts and must provide 100% funding and then the state rebates 40%. This becomes a cash flow problem.
  - DES: I can help you with that. I am being able to submit the contract as an advanced payment rather than a rebate.
- K Dickinson: Have you discussed the success of other applications of Clipper?
  - DES: I did not. Users in Massachusetts and Connecticut have reported

high success in agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers test pond results. Clipper looks good on paper and in the field trials but Clipper is new to the northeast.

Chairman Battis thanked Ms Smagula for her presentation and the people attending and adjourned the workshop.

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James Battis, Chairman