

TILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 16, 2023

MINUTES

Members present: Chuck Mitchell, Chair; Bob Hardy, Vice-Chair; Helen Hanks, Vice-Chair; Jim Cropsey; Ken Norton; Paul Rushlow; Jon Scanlon; and Kathi Mitchell

Guests: Pauline Tessier and Peter Spear

Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:00 p.m.

1. Pauline Tessier of the Silver Lake Association - Ms. Tessier spoke about the concerns of the Association in regard to water levels and the flow of water into Silver Lake at different times during the year. The NH Department of Environmental Services is responsible for the flow of water down the Winnepesaukee River, but the residents feel that the fluctuating levels are creating problems in regard to occasional flooding as well as times when the water is too low for some activities. She explained that there was a 1985 report from the Army Corps of Engineers regarding possible dredging activities as part of a flood control project. The plan was ultimately not funded or considered necessary. Earlier this past year, the Belknap County Delegation approved funds for a study about whether constructing an additional dam could help control the water levels. The Delegation asked the State to guarantee that the dam would be built but the State cannot do that. The SLA is working with the State to find money for drilling test pits to determine if there is contamination that might be uprooted if there was dredging. The Army Corps of Engineers will need to update its 1985 study, and NH DES will need to approve the plans, so there are a number of hurdles. One concern expressed by the TCC members was the location of a dam near Route 140 and how that would impact the Tioga Swamp and Gulf Brook Road. Members noted that there may be significant contamination at some sites along the river and that there are archaeological aspects to be considered. Bald eagles are found in the area as well as several rare plant species. The impact downstream needs to be considered and not just assumed to be of little impact. The Commissioners and Ms. Tessier will keep in touch.

Milfoil - Ms. Tessier also explained that the SLA will be using a herbicide treatment on milfoil and other invasive plants in Silver Lake. The cost is projected to be over \$25,000. NH DES will pay half the cost but will need assistance with the remainder. The chair explained that Tilton's milfoil funding account was limited and asked if Belmont would be paying a share of the costs. The SLA has access to some funds. The TCC suggested that Tilton residents could attend town meeting and advocate for additional funds to be added to the warrant article that has already been submitted.

The Commissioners took a straw poll regarding the concept of creating a dam near Route 140 for the residents of Silver Lake and felt that it would not be in the best interests of the environment or the community. All members agreed.

2. **Minutes:** The minutes from December were reviewed. Jim made a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented and Bob seconded the motion. All were in favor.

3. **Old Business:**

a) **December 8 Zoom meeting with NH DOT** – The secretary has requested the minutes from that meeting and will forward them to the members when available.

3. **New Business: None**

4. **Correspondence:** An email was received from Brownie Gengras in regard to a question about the potential archaeological impacts if the NH DOT guard rail project were to proceed.

5. **Other:**

- a) Change of use funds were discussed
- b) Recycling questions
- c) Various town issues

Paul made the **motion** to adjourn at 8:15pm. Helen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Kathi Mitchell, secretary