



Town of South Thomaston, Maine
125 Spruce Head Road
P.O. Box 147
South Thomaston, ME 04858-0147

Tel: 207-596-6584
Fax: 207-596-7529
E-mail: terri@souththomaston.me
Website: www.souththomaston.me

Selectboard:
Jeff Northgraves
Sue Snow
John Spear

Conservation Commission Special Meeting Minutes, March 29, 2023
In-Person Meeting at the Town Office, with Zoom Video Conferencing

Commissioners Present: Linda Garat, Catherine Lerme, Theo Pratt, Henry Spencer, Sondra Wallace.

Commissioners not in attendance: Neil Cambridge, Leslie Spear.

Associate Member present: Sally Merchant.

Others in attendance: Jeff Smith.

I. Call to Order. Henry Spencer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

II. Adjustments to Agenda. The order of business to be covered was shifted.

The following STCC meeting dates and locations were confirmed:

Wednesday, April 12, 5PM at the Gilford Butler Center, no zoom video conferencing

Wednesday, May 10, 5:30PM, at the Town Office

Monday, May 15, 1PM, Jared Gregory, District Forester, Maine Forest Service, will be at the Town Office to walk the Town land and make an assessment regarding trees, trail planning/building, etc.

III. New Business.

A. Discussion on 10-acre property being offered for sale by Ralph Cline III, M008 L002. On March 26th Sondra Wallace emailed the Commissioners about this property, with maps and a document titled STCC EVALUATION OF CLINE PROPERTY OFFER. After discussion tonight, the Commissioners agreed to recommend that the Town consider purchasing the Cline plot, but suggest obtaining a qualified appraisal of its value because it currently appears to be exceedingly expensive, i.e., \$3,500/acre. Mr. Cline's land would be a welcome addition to a natural area including some Town-owned land plus that owned by Jeff Smith, who is prepared to sell his much larger property

to the Town for less than \$500/acre. We would not want expenditure on the Cline plot to prevent a purchase of the land owned by Mr. Smith, who mentioned that the Cline property has not been logged for a long time, so it has old-growth trees. If an entity other than the Town buys it, the land may be cleared for the timber.

A motion was made by Catherine Lerne to accept and submit the STCC EVALUATION to the Select Board as our response to the property known as Map 008, Lot 002. Henry seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business.

A. Update on the Knox Coastal Conservation Commissions Conference. Sondra stated that there have been two recent meetings of a working group comprised of enthusiastic participants from six conservation commissions and Jake Barbour from Rockland, the goal being to organize a conference in the fall. She and Sally Merchant attended these meetings.

The purpose of the first meeting, on March 7, was to communicate what each group is involved in, and its priorities. During the second meeting, held on March 21, agreement on the topic for the conference was reached: WATER, i.e., too much of it: sea level rise, flooding and washed-out roads, storm surge, land erosion, inadequate culverts, etc. The Conference will focus on identifying issues and offering practical solutions to them.

Jeff Smith noted that in addition to involving area conservation commissions, the non-profits Trout Unlimited and Ducks Unlimited, both dedicated to conservation, could be enlisted, as well as the Family Forest Research Center (a research institute affiliated with UMass Amherst). The working group also proposes to involve emergency management personnel, the fishing community, and individuals who deal with infrastructure.

Catherine made a motion to support the efforts of the Knox Coastal Conservation Commissions, which was seconded by Henry, and unanimously approved. If the other Conservation Commissions also approve, the STCC will inform the Select Board about these plans.

V. Adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Theo Pratt at 5:50PM, seconded by Henry. The motion passed.