



Auburn, Maine

Conservation Working Group

60 Court Street | Auburn, Maine 04210
www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6601

Minutes February 21, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm at the Senior Community Center

1) Roll Call; Members Present: Dave Griswold, Sam Boss, Jane Costlow
Members Absent: Rhyanna Larose, Amy Dieterich, Adam Platz
Guest: Carol Lane

2) The November and January minutes were reviewed and approved. Dave moved and Sam seconded. Unanimously approved.

3) Meeting began with general discussion about the current state of the Working Group and possibilities for coalitions with other groups throughout Androscoggin County. In the past meeting together has been complicated by the fact that our meeting time is the same as the Androscoggin Land Trust and Stanton Bird Club. Jane provided information about a planned Androscoggin River Watershed Council conference in mid-May, to be held at Poland Spring. Jane will forward information to the whole SNRB.

- a) Jane provided a brief update on the status of deliberations on the SNRB report on the AGRP. There will be a special workshop of the Planning Board on the topic on February 28, with probable public hearing at the Planning Board March meeting. Jane also reported on the SNRB meeting scheduled for Thursday (weather permitting).
- b) There was brief discussion of the Issue of bulk trash day, which members felt would be a good topic for SNRB and the Sustainability Working Group.
- c) Sam reported on conversation with NOAA staff about Littlefield Dam application and Notice of Funding. There was lots of good feedback in conversation with two NOAA reps; they reported that there were numerous larger-scale proposals in the pipeline this round. They were encouraging for future applications, and made suggestions for improving Auburn's case, and recommended making clearer the connection to salmon fisheries. They also highlighted potential for connection to underserved communities, with the possibility of studying potential for alewives as a food source. Jane will email Councilors Walker, Morin and Staples to bring them up to date, with copies to Phil and Eric, noting that the Conservation Working Group is exploring ways to increase recreational access to the Little Androscoggin.

4) Planning ahead/Work in Progress

- a) Jane will put together a small “working group” to consider events to promote recreation on the Little. First step will be to think about optimal locations for a boat launch/paddling access.
- b) Dave gave an update on connections with PAL Center, Auburn Middle School, Evergreen Outdoor Education: he talked with Shawn Boyd, when asked whether they’re interested in environmental education, he focused primarily on photography. Jane reported her conversation with Andrew Tufts at Maine Audubon; they are interested in working with groups in Auburn, and he reported that he has “lots of plant material” for projects. Sam mentioned Ben Wilson at Auburn Middle School has expressed interest, and Wil Libby at Evergreen Outdoor Education would love to rebuild the Land Lab. Sam will try to set up a conversation about environmental/conservation education with these folks for our next meeting.
- c) Planning for Bittersweet Workshop. Plans are in place, organized by the Forest Board. The group discussed the idea of creating a series of very short videos for homeowners, focusing on how to eliminate specific invasives. Jane will reach out to Andrew Tufts at Maine Audubon to see if they might have funding for videos, and what species would they recommend focusing on first.

5) General Business

- a) Sam will work on the Annual Report for next meeting.
- b) Recruiting new Working Group members: Jane advocated for getting working groups active on specific projects, generate interest in doing projects rather than coming to meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30.