

TOWN OF GORHAM
CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES
January 5th, 2022

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board met on Wednesday January 5th, 2022 at 7:00 PM at the Gorham Town Hall.

Present were; Chairman Brett Johnson and Councilmember Ben Smith. Town Supervisor Fred Lightfoote, Town Board Liaison Brian Case and Town Clerk Darby Perrotte.

Councilmembers Lynn Klotz, Georganna Greenlee, Keith Eddinger and Brian Mastrosimone joined via phone/video conference.

Councilmember Meg Brewin was necessarily absent.

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting. Councilmember Ben Smith led the pledge to the Flag.

Privilege of the Floor – Councilmember Klotz thanked Town Clerk Perrotte for typing up the minutes.

Meeting minutes from 12-1-2021 were approved as submitted

Business –

A. Organizational Meeting –

Chairman Johnson said the first meeting of the year is an Organizational Meeting. The Organizational Meeting is to discuss rules, by laws, quorums, zoom, membership and classes that councilmembers can attend throughout the year. Chairman Johnson said the Organizational Meeting does not have to be finished tonight, there is a lot that the council can discuss. He said council can think about all the items mentioned and move it to the next meeting.

Chairman Johnson recommends that each Councilmember rotates as Chair for a meeting. Chairman Johnson said he has had quorum issues in the past and the Board should never suffer from lack of a Chairman.

Councilmember Klotz said “I love your idea of a rotating Vice-Chair. I think that is a great idea and I’d rather see that instead of having to cancel a meeting. In this day and age with the virus I think it’s reasonable to expect

that there will be unexpected absences so that's a really great option. Regarding taking classes I would be in support of professional development workshops and us taking turns attending those."

Councilmember Mastrosimone asked where he could get a list of classes that are offered throughout the year.

He added that Lincoln Hill Farms is trying to get accredited, through New York State, in hopes that elementary school students can attend educational classes and outings at Lincoln Hill Farms.

Chairman Johnson said he will get information for different classes and workshops. There is a data base of libraries for workshops offered through NYSACC and the NYS DEC.

Councilmember Klotz suggested that Councilmembers keep track of any hours spent on workshops or online classes they take in 2022.

Chairman Johnson asks his Council to look at everything they could that is a major concern and if there is something they can address right now they will. He is delegating it all to Council. He will bring up Organization concerns at the next meeting.

B. ROW Pilot Project –

Joining via Zoom.

Robert Putney, Co-Founder and CEO of Impact Earth a zero waste compost company based in Rochester NY. Their overall mission is to divert resources that were going to the landfill into a circular economic model for re-use. They specialize in residential and commercial composting and try to make it as easy as possible for consumers. They are happy to help municipalities divert their food waste from the landfill.

Zero waste composting is involved with many school districts, residential and commercial customers throughout Monroe County and some municipalities in Ontario County.

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board is interested in expanding their ROW project.

One of the incentives the Conservation Board likes is Impact Earth offers curbside service. That would alleviate the need for ROW participants to transport their bucket of waste when it needs to be dumped.

Councilmember Greenlee asked how it works with the school districts.

Mr. Putney said the school districts that Impact Earth services are provided totes (a type of container) and educational information. The school administers their own program. At Marcus Whitman they pick up totes

once a week. They take the toter to their farm, dump it, clean and sanitize it then return to the school.

Councilmember Mastrosimone asked what other benefits there are when you sign up.

Mr. Putney said talking about curbside residents there is a list of member benefits, the biggest one is they get finished amended soil back in the spring. Every April they deliver soil to every customer. It is part of their subscription service.

Councilmember Mastrosimone ask what the cost is for curbside pickup.

Mr. Putney said a basic subscriber with a 5 gallon bucket, and weekly pick up, would pay \$25.00 a month. \$19.00 for bi-weekly service. He said there are different options and discounts if you pay for the whole year at once.

Chairman Johnson asked about the size of the toters. He thinks an option would be to have them placed at various spots throughout the Town. That would give residents options instead of just one dumpster at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Putney said the toter is picked up and they return a clean toter each time. Impact Earth takes all organic material.

Councilmember Klotz asked if they could do both curbside pickup as well as a toter at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Putney said yes. They are expanding in the Finger Lakes area, especially in the next 3 years. He is very excited that the Town of Gorham is heading in this direction. He said it really takes a whole community effort, they are very community focused. They like to partner and collaborate with municipalities, residents and other groups that are interested in doing this kind of work.

Mr. Putney thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak tonight and he would be glad to come back anytime.

Chairman Johnson said the school is a prime spot to re-train a generation. He will continue the effort by the Conservation Board to partner with our school district to re direct organic waste from the landfill.

Chairman Johnson said the Conservation Board needs to discuss the difference between Impact Earth and ER Recycling. ER is the company the Town currently uses for their organic waste dumpster. They need to take into consideration the differences between the 2 companies and make a decision on how to best expand the ROW Pilot Program.

Councilmember Klotz said the fact that Impact Earth is willing to do toters at the transfer station plus do curbside pickup the Board would reach a lot more residents than the original 48 residents who signed up for the pilot.

Councilmember Klotz said Impact Earth simplifies it for the Conservation Board. This would reduce the cost substantially for the Town to get rid of organic waste.

Chairman Johnson broke down the costs, in detail, for the overall ROW pilot program. He said “It is cheap, \$2.29 per user per week, we just didn’t have enough users. If we had a lot more users, the tonnage price would come down in a heartbeat. Adding users eliminates cost, you either gotta go big or stay home.”

The ROW pilot was successful simply because it diverted 3.1 ton of organic food waste from the landfill.

The Conservation Board will halt the ROW pilot project until March 2022. The Board will notify the users.

The Board will consider switching to Impact Earth, they will discuss the options.

Councilmember Klotz asked Highway Superintendent Eddinger if he knows what the status of our Transfer Station is in 5 years.

Highway Superintendent Eddinger said “At this point and time we’re hoping it will be open, but we don’t know.”

Councilmember Klotz said it will be interesting to know what variables are used to decide what transfer stations in the County stay open.

C. Proposed Scenic Ridge Rise Subdivision –

Chairman Johnson said he attended the Planning Board meeting on December 13, 2021 in regards to Scenic Ridge Rise proposed project.

Conservation Board sent written recommendations to the Town Planning Board. The Planning Board found a moderate to significant impact would be made by this project.

Chairman Johnson gave Councilmembers a copy of the SQER. The developer has many questions to answer. There will be a public hearing held for this project. The Conservation Board will represent themselves at the public hearing to make a 3 minute speech on what their concerns are in regards to the proposed project.

Chairman Johnson reminded Councilmembers to think about any changes or suggestions regarding the organizational meeting of the Conservation Board.

Councilmembers set the next meeting date for Wednesday February 2nd, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Gorham Town Hall.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte
Town Clerk