

**TOWN OF GORHAM
CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES
February 1, 2023**

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board met on Wednesday February 1st, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Gorham Town Hall.

Present were; Chairman, Brett Johnson.

Councilmembers; Keith Eddinger, Ben Smith and Brian Mastrosimone.

Councilmembers Lynn Klotz and Georganna Greenlee joined via Zoom.

Councilmember Meg Brewin was necessarily absent.

Also present were Town Board Liaison Brian Case, Town Clerk Darby Perrotte and Town Board Councilmember Jake Chard representing the Gorham Solar Committee.

Guests attending via Zoom; Jeff North and Josh Watkins.

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Privilege of the Floor – none requested

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Councilmember Smith to approve the meeting minutes from 1-4-2023, seconded by Councilmember Mastrosimone, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Business -

1. Solar Farms –

Town Board Councilmember Jake Chard updated the Conservation Board on where the Solar Committee is at concerning potential Solar Farms in the Town of Gorham.

Councilmember Chard stated the Solar Committee has had one meeting so far and there is another meeting scheduled for February 7, 2023.

The Solar Farm Committee is comprised of various Town residents and Board Members and was formed to consider and discuss all aspects of a law that will help the Town regulate solar farms. The Committee plans to reach out to a company named GreenSpark Solar for their professional input.

New York State Energy Research and Development Agency (NYSERDA) has created a model law for Municipalities to use to help Towns with land

use regulations and to encourage the most appropriate use of lands. The committee is molding the law to fit the Town of Gorham's needs.

Councilmember Chard discussed the Committee's goal of keeping and preserving Gorham's pristine farmland and views. He said the Committee has discussed zoning changes, setbacks for solar panels, the 3 tier levels of solar panel installations and the 1-year moratorium implemented by the Town Board. The Committee anticipates the Town will have a completed law finished up and in place by May 2023.

Councilmember Chard said one of the biggest concerns for the Committee is the decommissioning part of the contracts. The Town of Gorham wants to make sure that, at the end of the contract, there is a plan in place as well as a bond to restore the land to its original use.

Councilmember Lynn Klotz asked if the Town will be seeking parcels to which they can direct Solar Farm Companies towards, that the Conservation Board could possibly help explore, and is there a list or a link that includes the State directives.

Councilmember Chard said the Committee has and will continue to discuss directing development to certain areas of Town. He said there is a website/link to the Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act (CLCPA) that requires NY to reduce gas emissions by 40 percent, he will get the information to the Conservation Board regarding that law.

Councilmember Chard will continue to update the Conservation Board on the progress by the Solar Committee.

Chairman Johnson made available The Town of Gorham Farmland, Open Space & Resource Conservation Plan booklets. He asked that Councilmembers look it over and when the Board regroups they will discuss the parcels in consideration of potential Solar Farms in Gorham.

2. ROW Update –

Chairman Johnson said the sandwich Boards for the ROW Program are in and already placed at the respective areas. He is still seeking a 4th place for a ROW tote for organic waste collection.

3. Tire Recycling Event -

Chairman Johnson said the date for the Tire Recycling Event, to be held in Gorham, will be on September 9, 2023. It will be a County Wide Collection

Event. More information will be available from the County as the date gets closer.

4. Potential Compost Farm –

Chairman Johnson stated he met with Robert Pultney and Town Supervisor Fred Lightfoote regarding a potential compost pile on Town land. Mr. Pultney, owner of Impact Earth, is interested in a potential compost pile site on land owned by the Town of Gorham. There are many logistics to be worked out. The next step is for Mr. Pultney to look at the land either in person or via Google Earth to look at the site. Councilmembers stressed the importance of visiting compost piles that Impact Earth currently operates to get an idea of what it would look like for Gorham residents, neighbors to the potential pile. Chairman Johnson will keep the Board informed on progress. Town Resident Josh Watkins had questions and many concerns about a compost pile in close proximity to his home and property. Councilmembers discussed smell, run off and rodents created by a compost pile. They agreed to research more and plan to check out compost pile operations currently run by Robert Pultney.

5. Organizational -

GCB Guidebook Start - Rules/Bylaws/Mission of/Duty

Chairman Johnson continues to construct a formal Guidebook for future Conservation Boards in the Town of Gorham. The Conservation Board held discussion.

Chairman Johnson said in formatting the guidebook he would like to start with basic rules of procedure. He will list out the steps. Councilmember Eddinger agreed to edit the text as it progresses.

Councilmembers agreed there should not be stringent rules regarding Zoom attendance. There should be 2 people physically present; Chairman or Vice-Chair and one other Councilmember.

Councilmembers attending via Zoom will have full voting privilege.

Agenda and documents pertaining to the meeting should be available 5-7 days before the meeting.

It is recommended to give Chairman or Co-Chair 48 hour notice if they cannot attend with the exception of an emergency.

Councilmembers discussed the rotating Vice Chair position, perhaps have the same Councilmember as Vice Chair for 3 months at a time.

Councilmember Eddinger said he would volunteer to be Vice Chair for the next 3 meetings.

Chairman Johnson recommends that when seeking new candidates for the Conservation Board they first nominate the member and then seek appointment by the Town Board.

Chairman Johnson welcomes all other suggestions for the procedure handbook and asked Councilmembers to email him any thoughts or changes.

Chairman Johnson said the Board will continue to work on the guide/rule book.

6. Privilege of the Floor – none requested

7. The Next Meeting of the Gorham Conservation Board will be held on March 1, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Gorham Town Hall.

With no further business, on the motion by Councilmember Smith, seconded by Councilmember Eddinger, the meeting adjourned at 8:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte
Town Clerk