

Draft Meeting Minutes
Jefferson Conservation Commission
18 January 2022

1. Members Participating in the Zoom Meeting: Nancy Decourcey, Chares Muller, Jamie Savage, and David Govatski. Guests: Leslie and Erik Bergum.
2. The meeting started at 7 PM.
3. Nancy Decourcey discussed the status of the Lovely property on US Route 2. The former occupants were evicted but the site has a considerable amount of trash and debris remaining on the site. Nancy will keep us informed on clean up efforts.
4. The Jefferson Conservation Commission (JCC) contact list was updated.
5. The JCC Annual Report for the Town Report was approved with minor changes.
6. David Govatski described the vernal pool that was constructed at the Mud Pond Trailhead last summer by the late John Silver, Sr. A donation was received to plant native wildlife shrubs this summer and was approved by the USFWS who manage the Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge. David will send an invite for the planting project.
7. David has been in touch with NH Fish and Game about discarded railroad ties stored at Waumbek Junction in the immediate vicinity of the Johns River. The concern is over creosote tar from leaching into the water. A site visit by a NH Fish and Game biologist is planned for April 12 and David will send out an invite for members and interested citizens to attend.
8. David started a discussion on a proposal to encourage Jefferson residents to install solar panels to produce solar power for home use. One factor that residents see as an inhibiting factor is the lack of a tax exemption in Jefferson for solar panels. Most towns and cities in NH have solar exemptions on property taxes. Berlin, Carroll, Groveton, Lancaster, Milan, Stark, Shelburne are a few of the towns that have a tax exemption on solar panels. See attached for a full list.
9. Erik and Leslie Bergum researched how various towns have approached the solar tax exemption. Carroll voted 107-43 in 2017 in favor of this exemption. This is the wording of the Carroll Warrant Article that passed: *“To see if the town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:61 through RSA 72:64 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with solar energy systems as defined in RSA 72:61, intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes.”*
10. The JCC approved a motion by Charles Muller to work with the Select Board on having a warrant article for the town meeting to seek approval on granting an exemption on the solar panels and equipment. The feeling is that this is the right thing to do to decrease our reliance on imported energy and to become more self-sufficient.
11. The meeting concluded at 7:45 PM. Future meetings will continue to be on Zoom until the community center is opened for public meetings.

David Govatski
19 January 2022