



Town Forest Committee

Town Of Hinesburg

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Meeting Minutes September 5, 2012

Opening: Steve Russell called the meeting of the Town Forest Committee to order at 6:35 p.m. on September 5, 2012 in the Town Hall.

Present: Brent Francis, Pat Mainer, Steve Russell, Stewart Pierson, Paul Wieczoreck, Jason Reed (6:38), Chuck Reiss (6:41)

Absent: Brooke Scatchard, Wayne Bissonette

Guests: Keith Thompson

Approval Of Minutes: Brent moved to approve the minutes of August 1, 2012 as amended. Steve seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Update On Salvage Operations: Keith reported that for the blow down at Economou Road access, he contacted the head of the Firewood Ministry. Keith hasn't heard back in three weeks. He sees another option: he can ask loggers if they just want a go at it. If it isn't going to happen before the winter, we should clean up the wood downhill that is blocking the trail and leave what is uphill for firewood later, which will be good even next summer. Keith said we should do a harvest plan.

Keith thinks the LHTF is more urgent because both the recreational trail and the logging trail are both blocked. The pine will lose value. The beetles that cause blue stain aren't there now, so a winter job might be feasible. Scott Darling said that all the work needs to either do no harm to or benefit Indiana bat habitat. His concern is how potential roost trees are managed. There is a requirement that any forestry occurs after November 1. Keith talked with Frank Babbott, who did some clearing work nearby for Matt Sayres who lives there. Waiting until winter when there is a chip market might be best. Keith could organize and train volunteers to mark roost trees. We can develop conditions that are more favorable for the bats. Keith will continue to explore this plan. Keith will talk with Scott about the best approach for managing educational opportunities. Keith will mark with blue paint on the stump of any tree not to be cut on the trail there.

Update On Bill Atwood's Work On The Economou Road Extension: Pat reported that she'd been up there. She thinks it's much better but she'd like someone with more expertise to look at it. Steve will call Justin Kenney to see if we should keep motorized vehicles off there till it hardens up.

Chuck asked what the status of the kiosks is. Steve said that if the plan is approved on September 24 we could start working on it at our October meeting. There is money in the budget.

Management Plan Comments And Clarifications: Pat suggested that we fix the map in the management plan to say Forest Zones instead of Forestry Zones and that the map show where horses and ATV's can go.

The committee talked about a proposed change to 3.2.1.6. to offer at the September 24 Select Board meeting.

Those present discussed whether or not ATV's and horses should be allowed on Bill's road. Pat said they'd done a lot of damage near the end of the road last year. Keith said it might be best to let them use it for now and require closing to that use until steps for mitigation are completed. Those present agreed to leave Bill's road open and try an educational approach by putting signs asking ATV's and horses to stay away from the wet part at the end. We will need a distinct color on the map to show roads that are okay for ATV's and horses.

Update On The FOTW Grant: Stuart said he ran into Andy in the NEK and he said we got the grant. Jason will touch base with Andy for specifics. Jason pointed out that FOTW uses the International Mountain Biking standard as a minimum standard and most of their work exceeds that standard.

Discussion On Committee Officers: Steve said that since the Select Board will be reappointing or appointing members in January we should have elections in February. Steve reported that he mentioned to Joe that there are four of us with appointments the same year.

Other Business: Pat got an answer from Joe Colangelo about amending the LHTF management plan to disallow bicycles. The amending will be on the Select Board agenda on September 10th. All it requires is removing the third bullet on page 67.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 3, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Pat moved to adjourn. Steve seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Mainer