



Town Forest Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes - May 13, 2015

- Approved 6/10/15 -

Present: Brent Francis, Steve Russell, Chris Haviland, Pat Mainer, Mike Potvin, Julie Gruenholtz, and Stewart Pierson

Absent: Kevin Hans

Guests: Mickey Stone

Call To Order

Mike Potvin called the meeting of the Town Forest Committee to order at 7:12 on May 13, 2015, in the Town Hall.

Additions/Deletions To Agenda

Richard Tom

Discussion/Approval Of April Minutes

Steve moved to approve the minutes of April 8, 2015. Stewart seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report

All members had received a spread sheet that reported that there were no expenditures or income so the report is the same as last month with these amounts in each of the three funds: Reserves - \$2523.59, Regular budget-\$1437.83 Kiosks -\$2681.03. Pat moved and Julie seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion was approved.

Updates

Maps: Consistency, Safety Zones, Hollis Parcel

Stewart took comments on the map. Folks were very pleased.

Brent resumed the discussion of trail names and wondered when the best time to change trail names would be. Steve suggested that we wait three years before making any changes. Brent would like the historical society to suggest names. Pat suggested that we take care of the items on the to-do lists in both management plans first. Chris noted that there would be safety issues with changing the names of trails. Brent would like the trails to be educationally related to Hinesburg's history and natural resources. Pat moved to approve the map as submitted. Julie seconded. The motion carried.

Forest Health Assessment - HHE Eagle Trail Project Plan

Mike reported that he and Keith walked from the Economou Road parking lot to the Missing Link. Keith will give us a stand analysis and time lines for harvesting.

Keith has not yet contacted anyone to advise on the Hayden Hill east project but will.

Boundary Marking

Brent reported that he has painted the eastern, northern and part of the western boundary of the Hollis Parcel. Discussion about the northern border followed. Brent sees no evidence that the whole boundary shouldn't be a straight line. Discussion of the northern part of the eastern boundary of the main parcel also followed. No changes are needed.

Brent estimated that we'll need 12 cans to complete all the boundary marking. Mike, Steve and Brent discussed the current inventory of paint and how far the paint goes. Steve moved we purchase six more gallons of boundary paint. Chris seconded. The motion was approved.

Mike noted that the Select Board may make the unmaintained part of Hayden Hill Road a trail instead of a road.

Brent noted that it seems that the only map that shows the Hollis Parcel is in the management plan.

New Business

Motorized Vehicles Damage To Trails In The HTF

Pat expressed concern that ATV's are damaging the trails especially the new work on the Economou Road extension. Pat moved to, per section 3.2.1.5 of the Management Plan, close the forest to motorized vehicles, block access, and give notice that the forest will stay closed until a group comes forward to repair the damage and come up with a plan to prevent future damage. Stewart seconded. Brent thinks that creating a user group would increase use and that we know who is using it currently and should educate those folks. Mike considers ATV's a traditional use whereas mountain biking is not a traditional use and that ATV use should be allowed. Steve commented that we might not get an ATV user group that is well qualified to build and maintain ATV trails and suggested that someone else from the committee take a look, too. Steve moved to table the motion. Chris seconded. The motion was tabled until four or five committee members look at the damage together. No plan was made for that to happen so the matter was left die.

Trail Signs By The Road At The Hollis Parcel

Brent reported that he took down the trail markers near the Hollis Parcel trail head.

Maintenance Of Trail Signs (One In Particular At Intersection Of Eagle Trail & Homestead Trail)

Stewart said he will take care of it.

LHTF - Invasive Species - Wild Parsnip

Mike reported that Tom Ayer communicated concern about wild parsnip on the LHTF. Andrea Morgante, Pat and Mike worked on removing tubes and mats from dead trees. There is more to do. Timely mowing will keep the parsnip under control. It needs to be done with fairly small equipment to get around the trees. It should be done soon after July 4. Julie moved that Mike speak with Andrea to figure out acreage and, if necessary, how to get a bid on the mowing. Chris seconded. The motion carried.

Centennial Celebration For Town Forests

Mike reported that the centennial of the legislation establishing Town Forests is this year. Mickey, Mike and Andrea attended a celebration in Montpelier with Mike and Andrea. We need to do something to celebrate Hinesburg's Town Forests. Mike asked if anyone is willing to organize a celebration. Pat said that she would with the help of one other committee member. No one volunteered and the matter was left to die.

Trails - Which Committee Best For Oversight

Mike reported that Keith thinks moving matters related to trails to the Trails Committee is a good idea. A somewhat heated and confusing discussion followed. Mike noted that this topic will be on the June agenda and everyone should come prepared to talk about it.

Eagle Trail Needs Gravel/Logs In Bottom Of Water Bars

Mike said that Keith recommended that we check, clear and maintain water bars annually. Keith also suggested that we add drainage stone to the bottom of the water bars. Mike will get an estimate from Bill Atwood.

Mickey noted that FOTW could take care of cleaning the Economou Road extension water bars for us as part of FOTW's regular maintenance of the trails. That would have prevented the current damage. Pat moved and Julie seconded that the committee accept Mickey's offer that the FOTW clean out the water bars on the Economou Road extension every fall as needed. The motion carried.

Richard Tom Memorial Bench

Mickey said the FOTW would like to put a bench with a small plaque near the top of Passing The Horizon in memory of Richard Tom. Brent said it is inappropriate to acknowledge one person in town and not another. He feels that the events that have been going on in town related to the two deaths have seemed "classist" and blaming and inappropriate and have bothered him. Steve said he is in favor of a bench and said he did not think the memorial ride was elitist. Stewart wondered if it would then be hard to say no to someone else who wanted to put a bench in a Town Forest. Brent noted that there will be more bicyclist deaths and that someone could want a bench where a hunter first shot a deer. Pat and Julie said that we should postpone a vote because it is currently such an emotionally charged issue and we need time to think about it. Mike promised to put this topic on the June agenda.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 10, 2015, 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall third floor conference room

Adjournment

Pat moved to adjourn the meeting. Steve seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Mike adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Mainer