



Trails Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – October 19, 2016

- Approved 11/16/16 -

Present: Ray Mainer, Jane Sheldon, Peter Modley, Sue Rusten, Chic McArthur, Stewart Pierson, Lenore Budd, Oren Guttman, and George Dameron

Guest: Greg Leroy

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

- 1. Additions to the Agenda** - Peter added revisions he's suggesting to a town-wide walking map.
- 2. Minutes** – Oren pointed out that in Point 7 of last month's minutes the name should be Josh Ryan, not Josh Logan, and the company should be Timber and Stone LLC. Ray made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Lenore seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.
- 3. Budget** – Lenore reported that there had been no expenses submitted since the last meeting. Our total available funds remain at \$1113.64. Lenore suggested that we start planning for some of the upcoming spring projects, reviewing what materials we will need and getting cost estimates.
- 4. Dog Ordinance** – George had written an article in the Hinesburg Record about some issues reported to us by users of the trails, including dogs not under the control of their owners and owners not cleaning up after their dogs. He had suggested we discuss seeing if the town ordinance on Animal Control be amended to help these issues. Greg Leroy had responded that he would like to attend to present the dog owners' point of view. George reviewed some of the complaints received, including Russell Trail becoming befouled over the winter and citizens nervous about using the trails due to fear of unleashed dogs. He had researched other town's ordinances and some of the fines were higher than ours, e.g. maximum of \$250 vs our \$100. Some ideas were discussed, such as renewing the interest in developing a dog park, restricting dogs from one trail and requiring dogs be leashed on some trails. Greg pointed out that responsible dog owners were being penalized because of the actions of irresponsible ones, but understood that as long as there were still areas where dogs could run free, he felt the dogs being leashed on some trails is a good compromise. Since Geprags is a park set aside for conservation of wildlife/bird habitat, the consensus was that making that whole area a leashed

dog only area made the most sense, especially if the dog park there becomes a reality. George will investigate the status of that project and will get in touch with the Conservation Commission (CC) to get their input.

5. **Motion to Amend the Town Animal Control Ordinance (ACO) 4.4** – Peter made a motion to consult with the CC re feasibility of changing the status of Geprags and to approach the Select Board to amend the ACO 4.4 to include public trails. Oren seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
6. **Northeast Quadrant Trails** – Lenore reported that, with the construction of a new section of trail on Sleepy Hollow property (thanks to Eli Enman and Fellowship of the Wheel), there is now a network of walking trails and rural byways throughout the northeast quadrant of town for which, with the exception of the White property, landowner permission has been granted for inclusion in the HART system. Because Sleepy Hollow does not want foot traffic in the winter when most of its trails will be used by paying skiers and snow-shoers, we will need to come up with appropriate signage and a map for the trail network. A motion was made by Ray that we wait until spring to place any blazes where we have landowners' permission and add signs pointing out that the hiking trails are for seasonal use only. Stewart seconded and the motion passed unanimously. This delay will also give us time to come up with an appropriate name for the trail network.
7. **Update on the Ravine Crossing on Hinesburg Land Trust Parcel** - Lenore had sent out notes from Josh Ryan as well as from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corp, about the difficulty and expense of putting in stairs and a bridge to safely cross the ravine and to help curb erosion. HLT is not enthusiastic about an expensive and intrusive structure on the property so we need to rethink our options. As a short term solution Stewart suggested adding a rope to about 100' on both sides, tethered to trees where possible, to give hikers something to keep from sliding on the steep segments. He made a motion that the TC allocate up to \$100 to buy the rope. Oren seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Peter brought up the longer term solution of rerouting it to an area he had found (and which Sue and Lenore had investigated previously). We could then either completely block off that crossing spot on the trail, or put up signs showing the less steep alternate route. Lenore will bring this suggestion to the HLT at their next meeting.
8. **Kiosk at Lewis Creek Entrance** – Stewart mentioned that the new kiosk there needed maps and other trail info. Ray said he needs to install the Plexiglas and Lenore reminded us that we need to get HLT involved as to what else to put in the kiosk. She will bring this topic up at their next meeting.
9. **Gallagher Property** – This topic was tabled until the November meeting.

10. Update on Trail Maintenance – The overhanging tree on the Russell Overlook trail has not yet been removed. Ray offered to take a look at it and see if it was something he could handle alone. George said that the cattle lane recently put into the Russell system makes the loop trail a bit hard to follow. Oren and George will check on this segment as the cattle lane gets finished to see if new blazes are needed. The Bissonette Loop at the LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest (LHTF) system needs rerouting and would make a good project for next spring. We would need to check the LHTF management plan, but Sue did not think it would be in violation of it. She offered to liaise with the Town Forest Committee (TFC) to double check. She also reported that some blocks of stone had been placed in a clearing near Gillespie Pond. Ray explained that the TFC is building a bench to commemorate Louise Roomet. Jane mentioned seeing a black stain, possibly a burn mark, on the kiosk at Hayden Hill East and that the kiosk roof, which Ray had left at Geprags in preparation for the new kiosk there, was no longer there. Ray will investigate both issues.

11. Town Plan – Lenore requested that we read it, especially the sections pertaining to trails (pages 71 to 74 and 83 to 90). We will discuss our suggested changes, if any, at the next meeting and provide any needed input to the town planner.

12. Election of Officers – Lenore offered to stay on as Chair and Jane did so as Secretary. Stewart offered to step down as Vice Chair, in favor of Sue, who accepted the position. Peter made a motion to accept the slate of officers as listed, Ray seconded and the motion as passed unanimously. Thank you Stewart for your years as an officer of our committee!

13. Record Articles – Sue is writing the article for the December issue (due November 15th) and Oren offered to write the one for the January issue (due January 10th).

14. Other Business – Peter showed us a map of the town where he color-coded sidewalks, trails and dirt roads suitable for pedestrian use. He suggested that this map would be a good additional way for visualizing the walkability of areas around town. We will continue to discuss his idea at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 16th.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Sheldon, Secretary