



Town Forest Committee

Town of Hinesburg
10632 Route 116 Hinesburg VT 05461
802.482.2281 | hinesburg.org

Meeting Minutes - May 12, 2016

- Approved 6/09/16 -

Present: Mike Potvin, Corinne Johansson, Pat Mainer, Steve Russell, Julie Gruenholz, Kevin Hans, Brent Francis, Chris Haviland

Absent: Stewart Pierson

Guests: Keith Thompson (Chittenden County Forester)

Call to Order

Pat called the meeting of the Town Forest Committee to order at 7:00 pm on May 12, 2016, in the Town Hall.

Keith Thompson: Advice on Inventories

Keith shared his thoughts on how we might pursue a course of action for a comprehensive wildlife, forestry, and recreation inventory. He thinks we should consider these two overarching questions:

1. What timber management can we do?
2. What is the intersection of wildlife management and recreation?

He answered these questions for the committee:

- **Are there any projects that come to mind that we could use to generate money to pay for the inventories? If so, who would you recommend be the forester to supervise these projects?**

He warned against using a consulting forester to manage a harvest right away. A harvesting supervisor needs to take into account the entire area, not just the areas selected for harvest.

Any harvesting will create controversy because there are so many users of the HTF, so a better overall plan needs to be created first.

Instead of harvesting to raise money to pay for an inventory, perhaps we can borrow money to do an inventory which will in turn raise money from a harvest to repay loan.

- **We have relied on the county forester to serve as our agent to advise us on all aspects of managing the HTF. With increasing duties for county foresters, how much assistance, and of what type should we expect from the county forester in the future?**

County foresters are currently only able to accommodate 60% of the required work to support the Vermont Current Use Program. This is their top priority and they need to spend more of their time with private land owners.

Ethan Tapper is the new county forester who starts May 31st 2016. He could brainstorm at one of our future meetings to see what can be done for him to work in concert with a forest consultant to do a complete inventory.

- **What pros and cons do you see in contracting a single company to integrate all inventories vs piecing out inventories.**

A single company has economy of scale by only walking through the forest once and taking into account trees, wildlife and recreation all at the same time.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Brent and Chris asked to add these topics:

- Safety zone signs for Hollis Parcel
- Butternut release
- Signs to discourage drinking and drug use in the forest parking lots.

Discussion/Approval of April Minutes

Steve moved to approve the minutes of April 13, 2016. Corinne seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Brent reported that the Regular Account has a -\$0.07 balance (there was a -\$36 dollar error last month), the Capital Fund Account has a \$1,659.03 balance and the Deferred Account has a \$2,523.59 balance. Steve moved to approve the treasurer's report. Mike seconded. The treasurer's report was unanimously approved.

Updates

- **Boundary marking plan**
Brent reported that the Hollis boundary marking is complete and a half of the western boundary of the HTF is complete.
- **Communication with UVM**
Nothing was done on this project in the past month.
- **Kiosk at the Economou Road trailhead**
Chris reported that the old Economou Road kiosk has been removed.
- **Tree Farm status**
Steve reported that we owe \$20 (total) for the last 2 years to be designated as a Tree Farm.
Steve moved that we send \$20 to the Vermont Tree Farm Program for the lapsed dues. Chris seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
Pat will be sent information on what being a Tree Farm entails and we will discuss if we should pursue this in the future.
- **LHTF boundary marks**
Stewart was looking into the status of the LHTF boundary marks. He was absent and unable to report on this.
- **Arrowwood Environmental "vernal pool" doc**
Corrine got a copy of the HTF Wetland Assessment that Arrowwood created

22May 2012. All identified tasks on this topic have been completed.

New Business

- **Safety zone signs for Hollis Parcel**
A neighbor abutting the Hollis parcel is worried, because of terrain that hunters get too close to their house. They want more safety signs.
Brent motioned to let the neighbor know that they can post signs 75 yards into the forest along their border. Corinne seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
- **Butternut release**
We have a healthy Butternut, which is rare because of blight. Should we release this tree so it can thrive? There are also apple trees that might be in danger of getting choked out. Perhaps these should be released also. We will discuss this at a future meeting.
- **Signs to discourage drinking and drug use in the forest parking lots.**
There is concern that there is drinking and drug use in the forest parking lots. It was suggested that there should be signage to discourage this. We will discuss this at a future meeting.
- **Expected attendance at June 9, July 14 and August 11 meetings**
It looks like we'll be able to get quorum in June and July, but the August meeting will likely be canceled.
- **Roles of Town Forest and Trails Committees**
This item has been tabled until next meeting.
- **Invasives in LHTF**
This item has been tabled until next meeting.
- **WhiteTail Landscaping work on the Eagle's Trail.**
This item has been tabled until next meeting, but was discussed briefly with Keith Thompson.

Other Business

None

Next Meeting

Thursday, June 09, 2016, 7:00 p.m., in the Town Hall, bottom floor conference room.

Adjournment

Steve moved to adjourn the meeting. Mike seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Pat adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Julie Gruenholz