



Town Forest Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – November 10, 2016

- Approved 12/08/16 -

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

Absent: Kevin Hans

Guests: Ethan Tapper – County Forester / Maggie Gordon – Hinesburg Resident

Call to Order

Pat called the meeting of the Town Forest Committee to order at 7:05 pm on November 10, 2016, in the Town Hall.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Pat added “Annual Meeting with the Select Board”.

Comments from the Public

Ethan reported that both Westford and Richmond are looking at creating town forests. He suggested that the HTF Management Plan could be used as an example/outline for these towns to use. He also suggested that HTF committee folks that were involved in writing the management plan could give them advice.

Discussion/Approval of October Minutes

Stewart moved to approve the minutes of October 13, 2016. Corrine seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Brent reported that there is a total of \$6,182.32 in the HTF account that includes \$1,500 in the annual maintenance line, \$2,523.59 in deferred, and \$2,159.03 in the capital fund. Steve made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Corrine seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Updates

- **Leaf blowing discussion**

FOTW submitted a document stating how they maintain the trails and leaf blowing. It states that leaf blowing is an overall positive for the HTF.

Ethan agrees that leaf blowing is a good practice trail for maintenance. It is not great for general forest ecology, but since the trails are for human use, human intervention with leaf blowing might be appropriate.

Several committee members agreed that leaf blowing keeps folks that are using trails on the trails instead of veering off.

Brent's research indicated that leaf blowing can benefit mountain bikers, but that there is no advantage for forest ecology. He found that leaving leaves on the trails is good, healthy cover for the forest floor. He thinks that if leaves are going to be blown, they should only be blown in the spring so the trails are less wet during the summer.

Chris's research indicated that leaves should be blown fall and spring so the trails remain dry and contained.

Corrine stated that blowing the leaves and making the trails more accessible is good for the stakeholders and encourages folks to use and enjoy the forest.

Maggie brought up the concern that encouraging folks to use the forest could reach a point that it is detrimental to the forest in the future.

Brent moved that we should only allow for leaves to be blown in the spring. Steward seconded. Discussion ensued. The motion failed 2 to 6.

Steve moved that we should have leaf blowing in the fall and spring. Steward seconded. Discussion ensued. The motion carried 6 to 2.

- **RFP for inventory**

Ethan reported that there are 3 proposals for inventorying the forest from: Green Leaf Forestry, Long Meadow, and Meadowsend.

Steve moved to hire Long Meadow, who submitted a proposal not to exceed \$4,650, to do the forest inventory. Steward seconded. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Boundary marking**

Mike reported that there are no updates for this item.

- **CVU students ideas for signs**

Brent reported that there are no specific updates for this item but it is moving along.

- **LHTF boundaries - Is there any evidence?**

Stewart reported that there are no boundary markings in the LHTF.

- **Butternut & Apple Trees**

Steve reported that there are Apple Trees near Hayden Hill West and to the

north of the Economou Road entrance.

Brent reported that we had an approved motion in August to clear around some Butternut trees. He plans to release these in the near future.

- **UVM students' product change**

Pat reported that the UVM students will write an article for the Hinesburg Record instead of creating a brochure as a final product of their project in the LHTF. They will present their results at the December meeting.

New Business

- **Puncheon & Rerouting on Bissonette loop in LHTF**

Pat reported that Sue Rusten from the trails committee would like to put some puncheons in and perhaps slightly reroute a short section of trail, in wet areas during their spring trails work.

Steward moved to allow the trails committee to do the work that they proposed. Corrine seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Tire Gully at LHTF - Milone & Mac Broom Report**

Lewis Creek Association is looking for “approval and commitment to move ahead” to support their proposal to improve the Tire Gully in the LHTF. They are not looking for a financial commitment.

Steward moved that we approve and commit to move ahead on the Lewis Creek Association proposal, without committing to any specific funding. Chris seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Annual Report Submission**

Pat volunteered to write the Town Forest Annual Report.

- **Annual Meeting with the Select Board**

On November 21st the Town Forest Committee is scheduled to present to the Select Board what we have accomplished in 2016 and request funding for 2017.

Next Meeting

Thursday, December 8, 2016, 7:00 p.m., in the Town Hall, bottom floor conference room.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted by Julie Gruenholz