



Trails Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – September 18, 2019

- Approved 10/16/19 -

Present: Jane Sheldon, Chic McArthur, Lenore Budd, Peter Modley, George Dameron, Oren Guttman, Nick Certo, Ray Mainer and Bret Golann via phone

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

1. **Minutes** – Peter made a motion to accept the minutes from the July meeting, Oren seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.
2. **Budget** – The report will be given next month.
3. **Gilman Road Parking Lot** – Renae (town administrator) has met with the adjacent landowner, Craig Chevrier, to discuss his concern with the lot incursion into his property. They were able to find some boundary markers but Renae will be asking the surveyors to reset those pins which could not be located. She will continue to be the point person on this issue.
4. **Hinesburg Town Forests (HTF) Closings for Hunting** – At their August meeting, the Town Forest Committee (TFC) had discussed the idea of closing the two HTFs for specific time periods during the fall hunting season to encourage hunters to help cull the deer population. Opinions were expressed by representatives from VT Fish and Wildlife, Fellowship of the Wheel, Trails Committee, hunters and Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester. At tonight's meeting the decision to prohibit recreational use during four periods, ranging from 6 to 9 days in length, was discussed. Chic pointed out that some of the time was during peak foliage season and would discourage tourism. Lenore reported that it was being tried for the first time and if it did not result in a significant reduction in deer then it may not be continued in the future. Bret pointed out that deer could move in from outside the area and repopulate. He asked how the success or failure would be measured as it would take five to 10 years for the seedlings they were damaging to grow. Lenore offered to find out.
5. **Trail Stewards** – Bret suggested reinstating the system of assigning a TC member to some trails so that they could be monitored for maintenance needs on a regular basis. The stewards could then organize work parties to fix any issues. Geprags was brought up as one area that

constantly needed work. Jane pointed out that the Conservation Commission (CC) has responsibility to do the maintenance there, but Chic said that he's been there recently to weed-whack and found it very overgrown along the Hill Spur Trail. He also noted that where Wahl had brush-hogged they had reopened a previously closed section. Lenore will communicate with CC, re maintenance of the Hill spur and entire park.

- a. **Eagles Trail** – Oren offered to walk this trail at least 3 times a year.
- b. **Russell Trails** – George offered to keep an eye on these trails and would enlist the help of some neighbors as well.
- c. **LaPlatte Headwaters** – Nick will continue to work with Peter VanVranken.
- d. **Thistle Hill and Passing the Buck** – Lenore will has recruited some neighbors at Thistle Hill (Tom Carlson and Gianetta Bertin) to be our look-outs there. We need to recruit some residents nearby Passing the Buck for that trail.
- e. **NE Quadrant** – Chic reported that the Fellowship of the Wheel and Eli Enman have been maintaining this trail.
- f. **Geprags** – Lenore will check on this system.

Bret offered to monitor any other trails which needed it. Lenore also offered to see if we could get the public involved some way in alerting us to any problems they found, by posting notices on Front Porch Forum.

- 6. **Dog Signage in Geprags** – George reported that he has been unable to reach Meg Handler on the CC to find out the status of the signs prohibiting dogs on certain trails. Peter showed a notice on his phone which was at the Geprags kiosk which mentioned the rules for dogs but that it was in small print and had some contradictory language re letting dogs off-leash. George will continue to try and get an update on which trail(s) is/are to be dog-free and report next month.
- 7. **Geprags Library Link Trail** – Lenore made a motion that we proceed with the construction of this trail this fall. Oren seconded and the motion passed unanimously. She showed us no trespassing signs which we will put up to minimize any encroachment onto private properties.
- 8. **Russell Trails** – Recently a TC work party finished building the puncheons over the muddy section from the kiosk to the first bridge. Tom Carlson, who lives at Thistle Hill, has asked permission to use some of the leftover wood to build puncheon on the perimeter trail. Ray was glad to have them used.
- 9. **LaVigne Hill Road** – Lenore reported that the VYCC will be there next Monday and Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to work on and improve drainage on the Class IV portion, if anyone has time to go, and give them encouragement and thanks.
- 10. **Town Forest Water Bars** – Chic reported that the water bars that Bret and others installed have been damaged by horse traffic, even though horses aren't permitted on that section. Lenore also suggested that we clean out other water bars which are on the Eagles Trail off Hayden Hill

West heading toward Passing the Horizon. Bret had left the conversations by this point so Lenore will ask him if he can organize a work party this fall.

- 11. Bridge Over Patrick Brook** – Alex Weinhausen, the Director of Planning & Zoning, has given the developer of Hinesburg Center II a timetable for various milestones associated with the construction of the sidewalk bridge over Patrick Brook on the west side of Route 116. If the milestones are not met, the DRB will deny approval of the Phase II.
- 12. LaPlatte Headwaters** – Nick will get in touch with Peter V and Paul Wiecezorek (of Hinesburg Land Trust) re grading the Lewis Creek trailhead parking area.
- 13. River Trail** – Lenore will continue to contact landowners re obtaining easements.
- 14. “Carse Trail”** – Lenore suggested we organize a work crew the weekend of 10/11- 10/13 to start the clearing of the brush for the trail on David Carse’s easement, from the UVM land to the end of Baldwin Road. She will send out some options as the dates get closer. We will need to rename this trail to avoid confusion with another of the same name – biking trails between the Hollow Road and Lincoln Hill Road.
- 15. Frost Proposal Easement** – At Lenore’s request the DRB included an easement for a trail but a neighbor challenged the proposal so it is going to Environmental Court.
- 16. Record Articles** – Lenore is writing the one for October and Oren offered to write on for November. There is no December issue.
- 17. Event** – Ethan Tapper will be leading a walk in the LHTF on September 28th discussing invasives treatment and the management plan. Lenore encouraged us to attend, and we could also use this opportunity to ask him some of the questions we have on the trail closings for deer hunting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next meeting will be held on October 16th.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jane Sheldon, Secretary