



## Trails Committee

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

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### Meeting Minutes – January 16, 2019

- Draft -

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

**Guest:** Bret Golann (prospective TC member), Pat Mainer and Jon Trefry (Town Forest Committee/TFC), Bill Flack (volunteer trail groomer)

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

1. **Minutes** – Oren made one correction to the December minutes, in that he had not been on the Forestry Hike in the Hinesburg Town Forest (HTF). Ray made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Oren seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.
2. **Budget** – There have been no expenditures since the last meeting, so our funds remain at \$720.
3. **Trail Grooming Proposal** – Bill Flack attended to explain that he has been voluntarily grooming some trails in the Williston area this winter with a “snow dog” machine. The benefits to hikers, snow-shoers and fat bikers is maintaining a flat surface free of boot impressions. An uneven surface can be a safety hazard during thaw/freeze cycles. It also helps in erosion control. He is proposing that he be given permission to test how well this grooming works on at least one trail (e.g. Maiden, International or Homestead) in the HTF. If the response from hikers and winter bikers is positive he’d be willing to groom additional trails.
  - a. Pat pointed out that motorized vehicles are not allowed on those trails. Bill showed us how little surface the machine affected and assured us it was not noisy, asking if an exception could be made.
  - b. Pat asked if he’d consider using the Eagle’s Trail. Bill pointed out that there are double fall lines on some places there, but it could be a possibility.
  - c. John asked how often it would require tending, with Bill saying it depended on the type and density of the snow. Right now he’s the only one using the snow dog so it would not be able to be groomed very often.

- d. Pat said the general sentiment of the TFC is to limit the recreation uses to what is now allowed, but both she and Jon will bring back the information he provided to their committee and discuss it further.
  - e. Lenore pointed out that there is currently logging on much of the Eagle's trail so it might not be able to happen at all this winter.
- 4. **SE Group Assessment** – Lenore reviewed the findings reported in this assessment but some of the improvements listed were vague as to what was meant and where they were located. Some of the improvements suggested may have already been made. Lenore will check to see when the study was conducted and ask for more specific locations and explanations.
- 5. **Update on Richmond Road Sidewalk Project** – Lenore, Peter and Ray Nails (prospective Trails Committee member) attended the Select Board meeting last Monday to discuss the TC's interest in moving the project forward. She reported that the ideas were well received and that the SB suggested that an Ad Hoc committee be formed including residents to get the most community involvement. There would be a small budget and staff support.
- 6. **Lincoln Hill to Hollow Road** – Lenore had received a response from the VT Fish & Wildlife saying they would not give permission for a HART trail across the Fred Johnson Wildlife Management Area. Lenore suggested that at some point in the future the Committee should evaluate the existing mountain bike trails on privately owned land between Lincoln Hill Road and Hollow Road (east of the FJWMA) to determine whether they meet our connectivity goals.
- 7. **Dogless Trail/Dog Park** – Jane reported that she and George had met to discuss developing a questionnaire to get the read of town opinion on the subject. However, due to the recent high traffic of postings on Front Porch Forum (FPF) on the issue, it was felt that any sample we would get now would be biased. She and George will work on designing one for Town Meeting in early March and send it around before the next meeting. George reported that Shelburne's dog park was funded by the town and there is a committee dedicated to manage and supervise it. George offered to post something on FPF alerting people to the fact that the new town ordinance specifies that all dogs must be leashed unless on the owner's property. He also will contact Mike Bissonnette to discuss putting some visible signage at the entrance to the Geprags parking lot stating that all dogs must be leashed, especially since many dog walkers come from other towns. Lenore will check on-line for any pre-printed signs.
- 8. **Task List** – Oren reported he and Anthea had cleared a lot of the blow-down in the LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest. Lenore reported that the land owner for the NE Quadrant Trail told her there is a dangerously leaning tree over a portion of that trail. Lenore will try to get a specific location so it can be checked out in the spring, when the trail is open again.
- 9. **Mill Street Walk** – George suggested that he contact Ann Thomas of the Historical Society to follow up on the historical trail.

**10. Winter Party** – Jane is working with Annette's Preschool to set up a Story Walk in Geprag's before the event on February 10<sup>th</sup>. The TC as been asked to set up luminaries along the path to the barn. We decided candles in bags with sand would be the easiest.

**11. Vice Chair** – With Sue Rusten leaving, Oren volunteered to be the new Vice Chair.

**12. Record Article** – Peter will write the article for the end of February issue. Any suggestions for topics would be welcomed.

**13. Good Bye Stewart** – Stewart has resigned from the TC and told us how much he enjoyed the time he spent working on it, since its inception in 2008. The members of the TC expressed our deep gratitude for his invaluable 11 years' service.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jane Sheldon, Secretary