

Readfield Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2020, Town Office

Present: Bruce Hunter, Jerry Bley, Greg Durgin, Tim Sniffen, Brent West, Stephanie Donaldson, Greg Leimbach, Andy Walsh
Excused: Marty Hanish, Bob Mohlar

RCC Meeting Minutes - A motion was made and unanimously approved by RCC members to accept the February 11, 2020 meeting minutes as amended.

Agenda was reviewed with items added.

Old Business

Financial Report- RCC members reviewed the RCC financial report prepared by Tim S. Reimbursement for the RTP is pending.

Updates of the Outdoor Recreation & Conservation Areas Map (front side map only) by Greg L. were reviewed. Kennebec Land Trust's (KLT) Rosmarin and Saunders Family Forest property needs to be marked on the map. Brent W. will track down property descriptions to allow editing (back side). Art Grindle (Kennebec County Soil and Water Conservation District) will make necessary revisions and send the map to RCC for final review. Money allocated for the project needs to be spent by June 30.

Fairgrounds Parking Lot – Brent W. spoke with Doug Beck (RTP) who indicated that nothing else is needed from RCC; reimbursement of the grant funds is pending. Only remaining work is to link up the new trail around the southeast parking lot perimeter to the existing footpath.

Readfield Town Forest - Jerry B. will contact Harold Burnett (Town Forester) regarding the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Town Forest tree harvest and road work. The RFP will sent out in early summer with work completed in late summer or fall 2020. The Belz Road extension and center lane (Loop A) repairs will be done before the winter tree harvest. Approximately \$6,000 is budgeted for the road repairs.

RCC continued the discussion of the use of hunting blinds at the Town Forest. KLT does not allow blinds on their properties. At the February meeting, it was decided that RCC would wait to see if the presence and use of hunting blinds becomes a problem at the town forest. Discussion was had regarding how use of blinds might be regulated (e.g., blind needs to be X feet away from a trail). Jerry B. will develop a draft proposal regarding hunting blind use on town properties for review.

Old Fairgrounds Pulling Stones Interpretive Panel – Readfield Historical Society has not heard about the status of the small grant (\$500 requested) to Maine Bicentennial submitted in January to fund the interpretive display. A small area of bluestone will be laid down for the display area. The Maine State Bicentennial is scheduled for June 20.

Trail Signs – Eric D. (TM) wants trail signs to be consistent in design and construction across town properties, using the existing Fairgrounds' signs as the model. Stephanie D. suggested using wooden signs as a green alternative to the plastic signs most recently used. KLT uses routed cedar signs made by the Maine State Prison. Brent W. will contact Jean-Luc T. at KLT regarding the signs.

Parks Commission Adhoc Committee – Brief discussion of the status of the Parks Committee and RCC's involvement in the group. The mission of the ad hoc committee is to coordinate the efforts of the Conservation Commission, Trails Committee, Recreation Board, Select Board, town staff, and others to facilitate the efficient management, stewardship, and use of town properties. It was not certain whether the Parks Commission has met.

RCC briefly discussed the status of Highland Ridge Farm located across Rte. 17 from Jesse Lee Church. The property is currently owned by Highland Ridge Farm, LLC which based out of South Portland, Maine (trucking company). Jerry B. will review the current status of property ownership. Maine Farmland Trust is willing to contact the new owner.

Town Conservation Properties

Torsey Pond Nature Preserve – Tim S. discussed damage to the grassy strip fronting the gravel parking lot at the preserve. The damage may have been caused during snow plowing of the lot and exacerbated by visitors driving over the area. RCC will wait until after winter to rake, seed, and set posts to better define the limits of the parking area.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted by Andy Walsh on April 5, 2020