

Readfield Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday March 8, 2016, 6:30 pm, Town Office
Approved April 12, 2016

Present: David Bagley, Jerry Bley, Greg Durgin, Bruce Hunter, Bob Mohler, Tim Sniffen

Not present: Martin Hanish, Beth Pritchard, Andy Walsh

Tim S. took meeting notes as Andy W is recuperating from surgery.

Time was taken to note the deaths of Stefan Pakulski, former Town Manager, and former RCC member Jym St Pierre's father.

February meeting minutes were approved. Thanks Andy.

New Business

We reviewed and amended the 2011 RCC Charter and Job Description. Bruce will make the changes and submit them to the Town Committee on Committees.

We reviewed Bruce's proposed 2016 work schedule. It is helpful to have this "to do" list. Specific items will be reported on via the agenda format below.

Bruce will check on due date for Annual Report and do a draft report for review at next meeting. Also Bruce will check on plans or schedule for public meeting(s) to discuss the Town Budget. Someone probably should be present to answer questions about the RCC's budget.

Old Business

Mill Stream Dam project –

No new developments. Jerry and Greg will meet with Bob and Jeanne Harris of the Trails Committee this week (3/10) to discuss next steps.

Fairgrounds Ball Field issues –

1. Ball Field Management Policy statement: Greg had checked with Milt Wright, and the policy statement which we forwarded to the Recreation Committee last month was the final format. No reply has been received. Therefore Bruce will submit our "2nd draft" as written to the Select Board as our final recommendation.
2. Ball field access road/loam pile: Jerry will check with Eric Dyer, Town Manager, about sending out RFP for building the road, installing a culvert, and hopefully removing the loam pile. The value of the loam should reduce the cost of building the road.
3. Access road gate issues:
Snowplowing – There had been some discussion of leaving the gate open to push snow off the parking lot. This did not seem necessary this winter.
Gate lock – Tim demonstrated the latest style of lock which has been recommended. He will explain it to Trails and Recreation Comm. Heads and to town staff before installing.
4. Parking lot snowplowing – Entire parking lot does not seem to need to be plowed in future seasons. Action?

Bridging at Torsey Pond Nature Preserve and Fogg Farm Conservation Area -

We should design the large bridges this summer (with help from Maine Conservation Corps?) and be prepared to apply for Recreational Trail Grant by Dec. 2016 or Jan. 2017. Funding to be budgeted in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Vernal Pool Data Compilation –

We need to review Dan Meyer's data entry and complete digitalizing our data before asking Stantec to produce a new vernal pool map. Since the student volunteer is not able to assist us, we

considered “advertising” for help in the Readfield Messenger or Community Advertiser. Tim offered to review Dan’s work and the materials he used, perhaps with help from Dan and others who might be available during the week.

(Post-meeting Note: I’ve just remembered from February that we were going to check with Cathy Bevier, Biology professor at Colby, to see if a Colby student might be interested in this project.)

Belle Vue Farm update –

Jerry reported that Maine Farmland Trust is planning to meet with the new owner to discuss an agricultural easement.

Conservation Properties (additional discussion) –

Town Farm and Forest:

Replacing oldest footbridge – Jerry and Andy made a site visit last month. Measurements of the distance to be re-bridged include the old bridge (25’ x 4’ w), west side bog bridging (17’), east side bog bridging (27’) and a wet stretch farther to west (24’). There were few or no living trees in the vicinity which could be cut for construction, so all lumber would need to be purchased and transported in. They recommended we consider re-routing the trail to a better crossing spot, and perhaps connecting with Howard Lake’s Smith Farmstead Trail on the KLT Macdonald property. We will plan a site visit after snowmelt, including Howard.

Note: Howard has offered to assist lumber hauling using ATV if necessary. We will need to purchase lumber before the end of this fiscal year. Hammond Lumber could probably deliver to farmstead area and hauling to final site could be done later.

Snowmobile trail along Town Farm Rd – The Wayne snowmobile club will resume efforts next season.

Fogg Farm Cons. Area:

Jerry and Greg will check with Bob and Jeanne Harris (Trails Comm stewards for FFCA) about installing water bars on new loop trail before erosion takes place.

Fairgrounds:

Erosion control in new ditch near MacDougald Trail – Trails Committee may have questions about our plan to install rolled matting in the ditch this spring. Bruce will check with Gary Keilty. We have envisioned this as a spring student workday project.

The trail easement for the portion of the Lower Fairgrounds Trail which passes through the former Lukas property is now due for renewal. Jerry has handled this before and will check again with the present owners.

Miscellaneous –

Current status of the Draper Associates parcel next to the Town Forest was discussed. Jerry will check with New England Forestry Foundation.

Meeting was adjourned at approx. 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by Tim Sniffen, substitute secretary