



## TOWN OF READFIELD – Town Manager

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**Date:** October 15, 2021  
**To:** Readfield Select Board  
**From:** Eric Dyer, Town Manager  
**Subject:** Readfield Fairgrounds Future Use Workshop - November 1, 2021, 6:30pm.

### Background:

The Fairgrounds is a roughly 36 acre municipally owned property located off of Church Rd. It was acquired by the Town in 1994 and has supported a number of uses over the years including conservation, parks and recreation, trails, and cemetery. The table below shows the approximate current use of the property functionally. It does not address programming:

Current Uses	Acres *^	Percent
Grass Parking Area (flanks the ballfield access road, used intermittently)	.47	1.3%
Gravel Parking Area (adjacent to Church Rd.)	.55	1.5%
Cemetery (mown and mostly vacant annex behind the old cemetery)	1.30	3.6%
Ballfield and surrounding mown area	1.65	4.6%
Open field (currently mown annually)	3.07	8.6%
Woodland	28.74	80.3%
TOTAL	35.78	100.0%

\* Above acreages are approximate based on available parcel data and aerial imagery

^ Trail and road acreage is not included in the above numbers

The use of the property has been generally governed by a Proposed Management Plan from 1996, attached for reference, in conjunction with actions by subsequent Select Boards, town meeting votes, and any relevant ordinances.

Recent activities and proposals have highlighted the potential for competing and conflicting uses on the property. The Workshop proposed for November 1, is intended to provide an opportunity for relevant Boards, Committees, Commissions, and the general public to present their views on use of the property to the Select Board for consideration.

### Workshop Format:

In preparing for the workshop the Town Manager requested feedback on format from the respective Chairs via email. These communications are summarized below:

### **Town Manager**

**10/13/2021** - "I met with Dennis Price and Kathryn Woodsum yesterday to discuss the upcoming Select Board agenda on October 18. One of the agenda items we will consider is the plan for a workshop to discuss future use of the Readfield Fairgrounds. I am writing to give you advance

notice that the workshop will most likely be held on November 1 and to ask for your input on the workshop format.

The format we discussed was a round-robin approach where each primary stakeholder committee (Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, and Trails Committee) will have up to 10 minutes to discuss their ideas for the future use of the Fairgrounds property. We would then open up to public comment for up to 30 minutes, and conclude with Select Board discussion and follow-up questions.

Please let me know your thoughts as Committee and Commission Chairs on this approach in the next few days so we can have a fully informed discussion at the SB meeting on Monday.”

**10/14/2021** - “Recent public comments have been very civil, even over Zoom, with the exception of one issue with the Planning Board. I believe the Select Board will be managing the meeting as a workshop, not as a facilitated meeting, but I will confirm one way or the other on Monday.”

### **Trails Committee**

**10/13/21** - “No particular thoughts on the format at this point but I have added this to the agenda for our October 27 RTC meeting so might have some input after that. This is important open space for the town so both conservation and recreation need to be considered. However, we long ago started moving in the direction of making this a city park rather than a serious conservation area but conservation should continue to be considered.

Not sure if it is needed at this point but perhaps an independent facilitator from outside the town would be worthwhile.”

Rob Peale - Chair, Readfield Trails Committee

### **Conservation Commission**

**10/13/2021** - “I will get back to you with my thoughts by Friday.

I agree with Rob that an independent facilitator would be helpful. “

**10/14/2021** - “The Conservation Commission likes the format for the public meeting. We look forward to the worthwhile, cooperative, and informed discussion on the future use of the Readfield Fairgrounds as expressed by Hannah. In the interest of understanding and clarity we think that each group should be asked to put their vision and ideas down on paper.”

Bruce Hunter - Chair, Readfield Conservation Commission

### **Recreation Board**

**10/14/2021** - “From the Rec Committee perspective I agree with the format and am happy the public will have a chance to share their voice as well. I am not sure there needs to be an independent facilitator. I would hope all of us can have a worthwhile, cooperative, and informed discussion on the future use of the Readfield Fairgrounds.”

Hannah Flannery - Recreation Chair