

Readfield Trails Committee Minutes

October 26, 2022

Present: Paul Bessette, Nancy Buker, Greg Durgin, Steve Hayes, Greg Leimbach, Rob Peale, Holly Rahmlow, Henry Whittemore, Jerry Bley, Bob and Jeanne Harris, Brenda and Howard Lake, Milt Wright

Excused: Jackie Drouin, Megan Lachapelle

Rob opened meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Henry agreed to be timekeeper

Steve and Bob announced the Trailblazer Award for Milt, who has been marking the Fairgrounds trails. Some people cannot see blue and blue is always difficult to see in dim light, so Milt marked them with yellow. The award is a plaque designed and made by Bob from a piece of birch bark with a yellow Milt blaze that Steve found on a trail.

Nancy moved that minutes from September be approved; Henry seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Jackie was absent, so there was no treasurer's report.

Rob reported that he, Howard and Brenda, Greg L. and Greg D. have been working on the Carlton Pond trail and much of the work is done. It has been blazed and much of it cleared, with just a little bit more work to do. Rob is hoping to open it in the next couple of weeks after checking with Brian at the Greater Augusta Utility District. He is planning on making a kiosk and putting it on a tree.

A group of students from Kents Hill School are going to work at the Fairgrounds on Tuesday, Nov. 1 (rain date Thursday, Nov. 3). About eight students and several Trails members will spread bluestone. Howard has volunteered to move some of the bluestone with his tractor.

Rob asked if anyone wanted to take on the job of posting the QR codes. Committee discussed how to proceed to make it easier, as the kiosks are difficult to open. It was noted that it might be a good idea to put the name of the trail under the QR code and print them on adhesive paper. Copies Etc. might be a good resource for that. Paul said he would look into it.

Rob said that Eric told him we are supposed to get regular updates from Trail Committee members who also serve on the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Conservation Commission, and Recreation Committee on the activities of those committees, so he asked Greg L. to update us on the Comp Plan, which Greg said is nearly done. Currently the committee is waiting for the results of a survey, which has been distributed and more surveys will be available on Election Day for voters to pick up.

Greg D. updated us on the Conservation Commission, which has overseen a recent harvest at the town forest and earned the town about \$15,000. The CC has also done some cleanup after the harvest and cut down some overgrown areas. They also sent a response to a proposal from the Comprehensive Planning Committee to in some way oversee the overlapping interest of Trails, the Recreation Committee and the Conservation Commission.

Greg L. noted that the Recreation Committee is very active and wants to do even more for the town. This weekend is Trunk or Treat followed by a movie.

Henry asked if the Selectboard still has liaisons that attend committee meetings and report back. No one seemed to know, but it seems as though that faded out.

Stewards reported on their trails. Steve thanked Paul and Jemalie for cutting down a fallen birch. He said there was another that may require a tractor to direct its fall. It was suggested that the town might take care of it, since it's a liability.

Greg L. noted that the town still hasn't placed the culvert for the Morrill Road trail. It can be difficult to access without the culvert. People are already using the trail as is, however.

Rob said that the Esker Trail is in good shape and that the bamboo is under control for now. Next year some more wood chips might be needed.

The budget for next year needs to be planned. We will need more bluestone. Greg D. suggested we might buy a wheelbarrow. The culvert installations need to wait for the town to act. Steve suggested we might want to buy some more signs. He said that making your way through the town forest and McDonald woods is difficult, but those are not under Trails' purview. It was suggested to approach KLT and the Conservation Commission. There are no signs for the Morrill Road trail.

The library is planning a Trails-related event based on a children's book about owls. Greg L. said he would help Melissa the librarian with anything she needs.

Rob asked if we need to respond to some of the language in the Comp Plan. It was decided it needs more detailed attention and the exact wording, so we will address it in a later meeting.

The Recreation Committee is hoping to proceed with the Fairgrounds project without using any town money. Henry noted that even though the town voted down spending money on the project there is doubt about whether the town will approve the project even without taxpayer funds. Several people expressed opinions about the proposal. Henry suggested that Greg L. share some of our thoughts with the Recreation Committee at their next meeting.

Rob attended the chairs meeting with the Selectboard and shared what the committee is doing, including the volunteer hours we put in.

Next agenda will include the budget, the comp plan and Dana Therrien's proposal. We discussed meeting after Thanksgiving instead of the Wednesday before. Wednesday, Nov. 30, was suggested as a possible date. Rob will verify by email.

Greg D. moved we adjourn; Nancy seconded. Adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Holly Rahmlow