

Town of Monkton
Town Forest Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 23rd, 2024
7:00-9:00pm, in-person and on Zoom/Phone at Town Hall
(Approved: TBD)

Members present: Callie Brynn (Chair), Jaime Schulte (Vice-Chair), John McNerney, Jessica Demeritt, Pete Dufault, CJ Buzzy

Members absent: Molly Parren

Guests: Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust), Caitlin Cusack (Vermont Land Trust), Tammy Parker, John Peters (New Haven), Stephen Pilcher, Debra Sprague, Marilyn Cargill, Bill Pelland, Cale Pelland, Kaiden Pelland, Fischer Pelland, W. E. Van Steamburg, Renee McGuinness, David Lein, Nancy Wood, Bob Aldrich, Chris Knapp, Tom Charnley, David Bristol, Dan Reinhart, Beverly Soychak, Adam Norris, Peter Norris, Alex Smith (Bristol), Fred Schroeder (Starksboro), and several others.

Purpose: to discuss Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing (briefly) with regard to the Town Forest Management Plan process.

The meeting began at 7:00 with cider and donuts, cookies, etc. Four participants were on Zoom.

There was a short overview of the status and timeline of the project. Bob Heiser discussed the Conservation Easement that Vermont Land Trust will hold and that it protects pedestrian uses, including hunting, fishing, & trapping, although municipalities can limit or prohibit these if there are safety or resource concerns. We reviewed survey feedback received to-date on hunting / trapping / fishing. There is substantial support for fishing and very few concerns. Hunting has some net support and many concerns, primarily about safety. Trapping has strong opposition in the survey, with many concerns about the safety of dogs, kids, & adults in this multi-use space.

Safety was discussed at some length along with a range of topics, including traditional uses of the land and reasons why hunting/trapping may be beneficial. A young teenager present noted that “us kids that can’t drive rely on places nearby to hunt, fish, and trap.”

Reviewed the Interim Management Plan, which will be in effect from the purchase (late November/early December until spring). It allows hunting and trapping per state rules, except between Hardscrabble and Old Airport Rd. It allows fishing per state rules.

The meeting concluded at approximately 9:00pm. More detailed notes will be sent to participants who left an email address on the sign-in sheet.

Minutes taken by Jaime Schulte.