

Town of Monkton
Town Forest Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 6th, 2024, 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
(Approved: TBD)

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

Members absent: None

Guests: Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)

Call To Order - Callie called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

- Review Agenda
 - Added review of a trapping request, a suggestion of brush hogging along the sides of some trails to reduce ticks, and a potential ARPA request proposal.
- Public Comment, up to 10 minutes - none offered
- Long-Term management plan
 - Reviewed outreach survey to date
 - Recap/Prep for special topic meetings
 - 1. Sun Oct 13th 1pm-3pm: Animals (Dog walking & Horseback riding)
 - Will send meeting notes to participants
 - 2. Wed Oct 23rd 7pm-9pm: Hunting & Trapping
 - Will send meeting notes to participants; schedule follow-up (early December). CJ will look into best practices for how zones or property-specific rules should be communicated and managed, as we consider options. Callie to reach out to Huntington Town Forest Committee on how they manage.
 - Scheduling part 2 of the Hunting/Trapping conversation: Wednesday, December 4th, 7:00pm.
 - 3. Wed Oct 30th 7pm-9pm: Mechanized recreation
 - Will send meeting notes to participants
 - 4. Sun Nov 10th 1pm-3pm: Extraction (Timber harvests, Maple sugaring, Foraging)
 - Subcommittee: Molly, John, CJ. Jaime will provide data to the subcommittee. Snacks/drinkables: Pete. Setup at 12:00pm.
 - 5. Sat Nov 16th 1pm-3pm: Visual/Aesthetics (Art/sculpture, Interpretive trails, Signage)
 - Subcommittee: Molly, CJ, Callie. Jaime will provide data to the subcommittee. Jaime/John: snacks/drinkables. Setup at 12:00pm.

- Initial subcommittee of Jaime, Molly, and Callie will look for a model management plan format to begin drafting.
- Jaime will reach out to Neal regarding a potential extension of the 4-month management plan timeline post-closing. It is not clear if more time will be needed.
- Other Updates, Project Timeline, Action items for closing
 - Selectboard resolution - needed 11/12
 - Timing of requesting CFP funds - request by 11/8, 11/11, or 11/12.
 - Jaime to confirm with Stephen; Bob to work with Vanessa
 - Bob/Callie/Jaime/Stephen to settle on the best day to request the funds
 - ARPA request in support of the MTF Management Plan
 - Discussed a request for additional ARPA funds, as there may be some that are not committed to a project (and may be at risk of being uncommitted by the December 31st ARPA deadline). Reviewed a draft letter to the Selectboard requesting funds. Jaime will update the letter and send it to the Town Administrator by Friday Noon.
 - **Jaime moved to request an additional \$15,000 of ARPA funds toward initial establishment of the Monkton Town Forest (for parking & trails, etc.) and unforeseen legal fees related to the project. CJ seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
- 2025 Committee Budget
 - Annual Kaolin Dam inspection (\$250)
 - MTF community launch: event and/or town-wide mailing (\$750-950)
 - This budget request does not reflect the future Road Maintenance Agreement and the Town's share of Old Airport Road maintenance for 2025.
 - Callie & Jaime will update the budget spreadsheet and send it to the Selectboard before December 10th.
- OAR Maintenance, etc.
 - **Pete moved to recommend release of the 2024 budget allocation for Old Airport Rd maintenance (\$3,945) after closing, in recognition of the residents maintaining the road during 2024 with increased visits by the public. Jaime seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
 - Jaime mentioned that residents of Old Airport expect to bring a draft Road Maintenance Agreement to discuss with the Selectboard at their 11/12 meeting.
 - Draft deeds of dedication need to go out from the Town to landowners with an interest in the road.
 - Abutter letters need to be sent by mid-November.
- UVM Field Naturalist - Fall fieldwork follow-up
 - The students completed tree cores and other field work. They will have a report to share with the committee next week.

- Review Minutes 9/28, 10/12, 10/13, 10/16, 10/23, 10/30
 - **John moved to approve the minutes of 9/28/2024 as written. Jessica seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
 - **John moved to approve the minutes of 10/12/2024 as written. CJ seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
 - **Jessica moved to approve the minutes of 10/13/2024 as written. Molly seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
 - **John moved to approve the minutes of 10/16/2024 as amended. Molly seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
 - **Jessica moved to approve the minutes of 10/23/2024 as amended. Jaime seconded.** There was no further discussion. **So moved (6-0-1),** Molly abstained (not present on 10/23).
 - **John moved to approve the minutes of 10/30/2024 as amended. Jessica seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (7-0-0).**
- Request to trap on the property
 - The committee has received one request, so far, to trap on the property. The committee considered what, if any, criteria are needed to give permission to trap and/or what other information should be communicated. We will provide the Interim Plan Map and the expectation that state law will be followed regarding trapping near parking areas and recreational trails.
- Request to brush hog along the sides of some trails (to reduce ticks)
 - The committee feels there is no need to mow the shoulders of trails at this time.
- Set next meeting date(s)
 - Special Topic meetings as noted above (11/10 and 11/16)
 - Regular meeting: Wednesday, 11/20, 6:30pm. Hybrid meeting.
 - Part 2 of the Hunting/Trapping conversation: Wednesday, December 4th, 7:00pm.
 - Regular meeting: Monday, 12/16, 6:30pm. Hybrid meeting.

Adjournment: Molly moved to adjourn. All were in favor (7-0-0). Adjourned at 8:59pm.

Minutes taken by Jaime Schulte.