

Town of Monkton
Town Forest Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 15th, 2025, 7:00pm
Monkton Town Hall & via Zoom

Members: Callie Brynn (Chair), Jaime Schulte (Vice Chair), Jessica Demeritt, Molly Parren, John McNerney, Cassandra Corcoran

Members Not Present: CJ Buzzy

Guests: None

Callie called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

- Regular business
 - Review Agenda - added an initial discussion of budget for next year
 - Public Comment (Guests) - none offered
 - Review Minutes: 9/17/25 & 9/30/25
 - **Jessica moved to approve the minutes of 9/17/25 as amended. John seconded. The vote passed (5-0-0).** Cass joined the meeting just after the vote.
 - **Jessica moved to approve the minutes of 9/30/25 as amended. Jaime seconded. The vote passed 5-0-1,** with Cass abstaining (not present on 9/30/25).
- New Business
 - Recommendations & requests
 - Safety Zone signs
 - Discussed that there could be many overlapping Safety Zones, depending on landowner requests, and there might be different ways to address that in the future. Jaime to follow up on the two requests received so far, to see if the landowners want to proceed.
 - Game camera(s)
 - The Committee received a request from a Monkton resident to place two game cameras on the Town Forest, at least 100 yards from any trail and not pointed toward trails, for this hunting season.
 - Cameras may be allowed for this purpose at the discretion of the Committee, per the Management Plan. The committee discussed the request and considered recent concerns from the public about the use of cameras on the property. Several points were discussed, such as safety, public benefit, expectations of privacy, etc. Members had differing views on whether cameras presented a concern of one kind or another. For some it depended on factors such as locations near trails vs. more remote locations or the public benefit of their various uses or whether the intent of the user was known. The conversation was less about hunting

as a use and focused more on the potential effects of cameras on visitors. There was agreement that some notification to the public regarding cameras would be appropriate, if any requests are approved. The lack of agreement on criteria to approve requests was noted as a concern by a member.

- After some debate, the committee did not reach a consensus on whether to approve cameras, which likely reflects the public at large.
- **Jessica moved to approve the request for two cameras for the purposes of hunting, with notification placed at the trailheads, during hunting seasons allowed in the Town Forest in 2025. John seconded.** There was no further discussion. **The vote passed (4-2-0)**, with Callie and Jaime voting nay and taking the position that the public benefits of approving this request do not outweigh the overall concerns with cameras on the property.
- The Committee will continue to work on criteria to use when evaluating future requests. We will also post the update on cameras on the committee webpage. Callie will communicate with the requester.
- Regular
 - Debris and trash removal
 - There is debris and trash to remove, from years past, primarily on the eastern side of the Town Forest near Hardscrabble Rd. This will be more of a focus next year.
 - Community updates
 - The committee did receive a concern about the new footpath trail being created between Hardscrabble and Old Airport, and plans to make some adjustments to the layout of the trail in response to the concern. Jaime and John will follow up with the concerned party about the changes, before work continues. The trail will hopefully be open this Fall.
- Old Business
 - Town highway 36 and related beaver activity
 - The Committee discussed that the Town would not be doing work on Old Lover's Lane at this time, but an individual could do so following state rules. The Committee would like to continue conversations with stakeholders about the future of the road. The committee will start drafting a list of options.
 - Proposed and routine work (kiosk/signage, trails, etc.)
 - Kiosks, connector trail, mowing, signage, invasives
 - Field mowing: discussed field/open areas on the property and whether to mow them this Fall. We will mow part of the field adjacent to the parking on Old Airport and also one of the

former log landings, whichever is beginning to convert to saplings the most. This work would happen on or after November 1st. There is a desire to also maintain some over-wintering habitat for pollinators, by rotating the locations of mowing annually/seasonally.

- Federal Grant final report
 - The grant report was submitted in September. Jaime to follow up.
- Kaolin Dam status
 - Conditions are good at the dam. The Beaver Deceiver is working well.
- Old Airport Road
 - Jaime has had some conversations with residents and will continue them, looking for a path forward on road maintenance and road status. The Town's share of the amount for road maintenance in 2024, approved in January, was paid recently after residents clarified where to send the funds. Next, we need to discuss 2025.
- Grants/fundraising financial update
 - The subcommittee is looking into a trails grant.
- Budget
 - Operating Budget - discussed briefly and will finalize in November.
 - Management Fund - Jaime will work with the Town Treasurer to clarify the Management Fund balance and transaction history.
- Upcoming Community Events (*'On the calendar'*)
 - Lewis Creek Association Annual Meeting 10/18/25 - members and the public are welcome to join a set of activities taking place around Monkton this Saturday in connection with this event. More info on Front Porch Forum.
- Action Items
 - Jaime to follow up on the two requests received about Safety Zone signs, to see if the landowners want to proceed
 - Callie to communicate about cameras to the requestor
 - Jaime and John to follow up about the trail concern
 - Committee to send thoughts on Town Highway 36 options to Callie
 - Jaime to do some limited field/open area mowing after November 1st
 - OAR - Jaime to continue conversations with residents
 - Jaime to meet with the Town Treasurer about the Management Fund
 - Jaime to reach out to the Federal Grant program to confirm closure
 - Molly to look into best practices for ethical camera use policies
 - Callie to respond to the UVM students' request for an interview
 - All to read the draft Shade Tree Plan from the Tree Warden before the next meeting when the Warden may join us to discuss it.
- Determine time/date of next meeting:
 - Wednesday, November 19th, 7:00pm

Adjournment

Jessica moved to adjourn at 8:58pm. Cass seconded. The vote passed 6-0-0.