

**Town of Monkton
Town Forest Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 8th, 2023, 5:30pm
Monkton Town Hall & via Zoom
(Approved: TBD)**

Members present: Callie Brynn (Chair), Jaime Schulte (Vice-Chair), John McNerney, Molly Parren, CJ Buzzy (Alternate)

Members absent: Peter Dufault

Guests: Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)

Call To Order - Jaime called the meeting to order at 5:34pm.

- 1. Reviewed the Agenda** - no changes
- 2. Public Comment (15 minutes)** - there was no public comment
- 3. Reviewed minutes**
 - a. **John moved to approve the minutes of 9/20/2023 as written. Molly seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (5-0-0).**
 - b. **John moved to approve the minutes of 10/17/2023 as amended. Molly seconded.** There was no further discussion. **All were in favor (5-0-0).**
 - c. **John moved to approve the minutes of 8/16/2023 as written. Molly seconded.** There was no further discussion. **The vote was (4-0-1) in favor,** with Callie abstaining (not present on 8/16).
- 4. UVM Landscape Inventory & Assessment class Jan-May '24**
 - a. Letter of agreement is the next step. Callie will create a draft. Molly will be a second reviewer. It will also be shared with Walt Poleman for his feedback ahead of a final review/approval at the MTFC meeting in early December.
 - b. Funding source for the town contribution to the class: there are 3 options to cover the \$1-2k amount. The Davis Grant applied for may cover it (more on that below); it could be fundraised with the \$50k fundraising effort in progress; or it may fit into the existing project budget under Management Plan development, as the results of the UVM class will be a significant contribution to the Management Plan.
- 5. Town Forest Committee annual budget & report**
 - a. The committee should have a small operating budget for 2023 (currently \$1,000?), which has not been used yet in 2023. It might be a fourth option to cover the UVM class contribution. We do anticipate expenses around the startup of the town forest for community outreach, events, etc.
 - b. John will confirm our existing budget with the Treasurer.
 - c. The 2024 budget request is due in December (will complete the request at our next meeting).

- d. The Town Forest annual report is due in January (Jaime will work on an initial draft to review at the December meeting).
- 6. Management Plan planning & community engagement timeline, Other updates**
- a. The overall approach to the Management Plan would be to develop an interim management plan that takes effect at closing, followed by a complete Management Plan within four months of closing (expected by the federal grant).
 - b. We will look at other recent Management Plans, such as Huntington's.
 - c. Bob will send the committee an example of an interim management plan, with guidance from VHCB for such plans. An interim plan can contain some planning that is more developed, such as a parking area, but usually does not allow optional uses (such as horseback riding, snow machines, and mountain bikes) until those Management Plan discussion topics have been completed with the community.
 - d. John reported about a question from Kim Jewell regarding a potential VAST trail connection to Queen Bee's.
- 7. Old Airport Rd updates (if available)**
- a. Waiting for drafts of a road maintenance agreement & public access easement from the town attorney.
- 8. Grant/funding updates (Fundraising committee, appraisal update, etc).**
- a. VLT has applied for a Davis grant (\$12k), which we hope to hear a decision on by January.
 - b. The fundraising committee has held a couple of meetings so far and is making good progress preparing outreach to potential donors. The committee is initially focusing on larger gifts, but will reach out in a broader way toward the end of the year and early next year to complete the fundraising drive.
- 9. Other project updates**
- a. VLT is working with the appraiser and a review appraiser to update the parcel's appraisal, as it has been a year since the initial work. There are a couple of small factors in that reappraisal, such as a boundary line adjustment with Bowman and a shared well off of Hardscrabble Rd., which would likely not make any material change to the valuation but would resolve title questions. Funding for the appraisal work should be covered by the remainder of the 2022 request approved from the ANAC budget (approximately \$1900).
- 10. Twenge/Paul Fournier storm salvage**
- a. John will follow up on the current status.
- 11. Set next meeting date(s)**
- a. Wed Dec 6th, 6:00pm (may be changed to 5:30 - please check the Town Calendar before arriving)

Adjournment - Molly moved to adjourn. All were in favor (5-0-0). Adjourned at 7:13pm.

Minutes taken by Jaime Schulte.