

Little Big Forest Stewardship Committee

Minutes - Monthly Meeting – 10-11-23

Members Present: Robert Winterbottom (Chair), Tim Rowehl (Vice Chair), Terri LaRoche (Secretary), Jason Kovarik, Geoff Jones, Milosh Bukovcan, Maggie Forestall (via phone for portion of meeting)

Members unable to attend: Tim Healy, Jaelyn Stetson, Craig Walker

Public Present: None

Main agenda items and discussion:

Meeting was convened at 7:06 PM and Bob Winterbottom led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of Minutes October 11, 2023 SC meeting. Bob invited comments on the 10/11/23 Meeting minutes. Terri noted Milosh's last name was spelled incorrectly. Tim made a motion to pass, Bob Seconded, unanimously approved.

Update from October Con Com Meeting on issues related to LBF

Geoff indicated there has been no progress on the parking lot as Aaron Bryer did not attend the last meeting (and attendance has been light in general).

Geoff indicated that the Boundary Line adjustment for Walker is Scheduled for December 5th, he completed the Mylar and Materials and provided to Vickie Williams (Planning Board Secretary) and she will send to abutters Monday. Pollack has not signed and Geoff is awaiting resolution as he wants the drill holes firm.

Geoff said the Kiosk and trails have been put on the back burner for the moment as he has not had time.

Jaelyn joined Geoff on 11/4 at the NH Association of Conservation Commission's 53rd Annual meeting and conference where Geoff did a presentation with about 25 people present. Feedback was very positive with many indicating it was one of the best presentations to date.

Cabin Clean Up

Jason indicated the Girl Scouts are organizing a clean up as the clean up can be applied towards earning a badge. He will let us know the date, A pick up truck can get down there for cleanup, Jason thought that screening and back steps needed repairs, Milosh and Tim will take a look.

JFES Educational Plan

Maggie joined by phone and walked through the google sheet the teachers are working on to identify priorities among possible educational and recreational activities in the LBF. The teachers are also thinking about what equipment and other needs could be addressed to support these activities (for example, sanitation facilities, fire pit, tables and chairs, improvements to the cabin, provision of tools and learning aids for specific lessons, arrangements for transportation, etc.) (???? email, they have added items to cover things such as clubs and Art.) They have organized activities on a Calendar and developed a Wishlist's for both materials and programming with priority of Top (this year), Medium (next two years) and Low (next 5 years). Well done and well received. The group agreed that a next step

would be to load the calendar and wishlist on Google Doc and to integrate this information into the updating of the draft management plan.

There was discussion regarding funding of items on the wishlist. The general donations can only be used for LBF itself, so Storage in Cabin, the Homebase etc. are viable with that, subject to the review and approval of the Conservation Commission and the Town of Stoddard. There is latitude in the Grant provided for the LBF for Transportation that if used for education, and those funds may also be able to cover an LBF Education Coordinator, but as we plan, we may need to think about additional fundraising (perhaps as contributions to a "Friends of LBF" organization with 501.3(c) status.

Geoff indicated this is exactly what we are looking for. Jason added Maggie's SAU address to our shared drive so she can upload documents. Maggie will look to complete an overall vision statement in the next month to help with requests for additional funds.

Maggie is working with Jill on an application (with Parent) for a Student SC Member. The thought is it would be one student throughout the School Year. We will need to determine frequency of attendance (monthly, quarterly etc.) and may want to adjust the date / time of the Stewardship Committee meeting so it is easier for a student to participate in the meeting (i.e. avoid meeting too late on a school night).

LBF Book/Resource Materials at Davis Library

Bob indicated that he has had some back and forth with Inga and they have a face-to-face meeting set for tomorrow. The idea is to set aside some relevant and interesting materials to encourage users of the library to take an interest in learning more about the Little Big Forest and to educate themselves on conservation issues. Inga has a couple possible sites in mind to display the materials. The displayed items could include a copy of the LBF Management Plan, and both technical and popular books on forest conservation topics (Bob shared a list with some suggested titles which he has given to Inga).

Draft Mgmt. Plan (circulated by Geoff 9/13)

To open the discussion about updates and revisions to the draft management plan, Bob summarized the key points shared by Geoff with respect to the required main elements of the community forest management plan outlined by the US Forest Service - and discussed a few areas to be targeted as we work on the management plan. As an example, he noted that the language related to management goals and objectives could be consolidated, and shared a draft with proposed text for management goals and objectives on Google docs.

Tim noted that he had reviewed the section in the draft plan related to the cabin and facilities. Tim and Milosh are interested in suggesting some revisions and additions to this section.

With inputs from Maggie and the teachers, and the expected "vision" document being prepared by JFES teachers, the section on educational uses can also be updated and expanded.

Bob noted a need to update and add text related to public participation, and the role of the Stewardship Committee, as well as an expanded section on recreational activities that reflect inputs from the listening sessions.

Terri acknowledged that an updated and expanded section is needed to discuss funding, budgeting and financial management issues for the implementation of the updated community forest management plan. There was discussion on Financials and a long term need to determine how it will work with respect to the authority of the Conservation Commission to make decisions and to disburse funds directly, vis a vis authorizations and approvals by the Town BOS and others. According to the Town Admin, the Town itself can not pay EVA Lane even as part of the deed (they did pay the recent dues) and the Trustee's can not either. Terri will see if she can find out the "why" on this.

Tim will update his section based on Maggie's documents shared. Terri will update the grid to see if we can leverage Maggie's Priority system so we can establish short and longer term items.

Terri will take a stab at the section regarding budgeting stewardship activities, funding, fund raising, financial management (pages 60-63 and 66, 67).

We will also need to firm up policies and other details concerning what's allowed/not allowed, and we propose to review the updated Matrix at our next Meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:59.

Minutes submitted by Terri LaRoche – SC Secretary