

**Stoddard Conservation Commission**  
**Meeting Agenda**  
**Wednesday, January 24, 2024 7 pm @ Town Hall**

Members Present: Geoff   X   Bob        Jason   X   Jaelynn   X   Aaron       

**Agenda:**

**1. Accept Minutes from November 29, 2023**

November 29, 2023 meeting minutes have not been posted to the Town of Stoddard website. Unable to accept minutes at this time, will be accepting November 29, 2023 and January 24, 2024 meeting minutes at February 22, 2024 meeting.

**2. Pioneer Lake Update**

- a. Riser needs to be cleaned out.
- b. Replacement fence and 8-foot metal posts purchased in Jason's possession.
- c. Aaron: Will need quotes on road work.  
    Aaron will tentatively complete work  
    01/26-01/27/2024, weather dependent.

**3. LBF Updates**

- a. BLA Planning Board hearing rescheduled for February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- b. Trailhead kiosk: Geoff will do draft of signage and maps for Feb. meeting. Current rough estimate; \$1,200-\$2,000.
- c. Need to schedule for spring construction for parking lot and kiosk
- d. Blaze bounds (still waiting for the planning board to finalize BLA); flag out trail in next month or two.
- e. Submitted grant to receive Bailey Funds (\$40,000 for 2024) We received a check for \$20,000 in Dec. 2023 and another one in Jan. 2024.
- f. Jan. 24, 2024 M & B bank account for LBF
  - Stewardship balance: \$131,752+/-
  - i. BLA abutter payments: \$18,000+/-
  - ii. Bailey Dec. 2024 payment: \$20,000
  - iii. Conservation Fund accrued from previous years: \$17,409
- g. Total Funds (not counting two Pioneer Lake

accounts with Trustees of Funds): \$187,161+/-

#### **4. Stewardship Committee**

- a. SC members Tim Rowehl and Milosh Bukovcan replaced back steps to cabin and did a cursory cleanup of the cabin and grounds;
- b. The SC came up with a list of short-term priorities for the cabin and site:
  - i. For water supply, the committee suggested having a dispenser for 5-gallon jugs of water.
  - ii. For lighting, the committee suggested use of battery-operated lamps and possibly kerosene lamps.
  - iii. For sanitation, the committee suggested installing a porta-potty at an accessible point on Phyllis Lane, and possibly a second one near the parking area on Shedd Hill Road.
  - iv. To reduce reliance on a porta-potty, the committee proposes a budget for the acquisition and installation of a composting toilet, to be installed in the vicinity of the cabin. The committee also recommends further improvements for lighting and water supply in the longer term.
  - v. The committee also recommended installing a dry well for waste water from the cabin sink.
  - vi. For cooking and campfires, the committee suggested a low impact Solo type bonfire stove or fire pit could be installed on a gravel pad (with organic matter dug out and removed) most likely behind the cabin.
  - vii. Also, the committee should check the stove pipe and clean the stove in the cabin to ensure it can be used safely. Obtain proper chimney safety inspection by Stoddard Fire Department prior to using the wood stove. Minor repairs could also be made to the screens for the cabin.
  - viii. In addition, the committee recommended establishment of a vehicle turn-around area at an appropriate site on Phyllis Lane.
  - ix. Beginning next spring, work days could be scheduled as needed (with CC and SC committee members, students, others) to participate in these maintenance activities and other work including marking of trails,

signage, parking sites, etc.

c. JFES student leader applications to SC:

- i. Student applications sent to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders soliciting student committee volunteers: five applications were received.
- ii. The SC committee was so impressed they suggested JFES form a school SC committee; the students accepted. They will meet bi-weekly with guidance from 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Maggie Forrestall and report to the SC at their monthly meetings. *To facilitate student participation, monthly meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 6 pm at the Town Hall.*

#### **5. Finalizing the Draft Mgt Plan:**

- a. With input and suggestions from the SC and JFES school, the draft management plan is being finalized for submission to the USFS. Once it is completed (next week or so) it will be circulated for review to con com and SC members.
- b. The original budget for developing a management plan included field recon; field inventory; timber appraisal report for appraisal; developing several GIS maps and writing the 80+ page report was \$7,500.
- c. Finalizing the plan includes revisions and updates to narrative; public input from listening sessions; JFES school input; updating all the GIS maps for an additional \$500.

#### **6. Need motion to approve an expenditure of \$8,000:**

A motion for an expenditure of \$8,000 for the finalized USFS approved Community Forest Management Plan for the Little Big Forest:

Jason Kovarik motioned, Jaelynn Stetson second.

Will need the other two members to accept or deny this motion.

#### **7. Required officer elections:**

Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary & Treasurer

Due to Geoff's change of residency, all four positions will need to be filled prior to May. Due to absences of the board, further discussion of officer elections will occur February 22, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall.

**8. Change of February, 2024 Meeting Date:**

The Conservation Commission February, 2024 meeting has been changed due to scheduling conflicts and will occur on *February 22, 2024 at 7:00 pm* at the Town Hall. All members will be notified and the change of date will be publicized on the Town of Stoddard website.

**9. Adjourn:** January 24, 2024 at 8:09 pm