

Minutes of the Forest and Trails Committee
Town of Conway, Massachusetts
May 25, 2022
6:30 pm Town Hall

Present:

Members: Marilyn Webster, Deb Donaldson, Priscilla Lynch, Suzanne Artemieff

Associate Members: Cynthia Lawton-Singer, Courtney Gilligan

Invited Guests: Mary Wigmore

Called to order, 6:35 pm by Deb Donaldson.

Minutes of meetings of April 27 unanimously approved with addition.

Follow-up on the Maynard Cemetery walk:

- Suzanne will send out email to thank volunteers for their help.
- For future walks, it will be made clear that dogs must be on leash.

Marilyn provided an update on follow-up to the 2nd educators walk of the Fournier trail:

- After sending multiple requests for update on further activity by school, Marilyn received an email from Jaime Jackman the morning of May 25, which indicated there are plans to take students onto the Fournier land on June 1, 7 and 8.
- Committee raised concerns about stated plan to take students off trail to explore possibilities for loop around ice pond and that stated plans do not address Committee's first phase plan as communicated to school.
- Marilyn to communicate Committee's concerns to Jaime and seek clarification regarding her thinking.
- Conservation Commission will need to be consulted before students can be taken off trail and prior to any exploration for additional trails/loops can be planned.

Cynthia reported on 4 short educational films associated with the Nolumbeka Project, which comprise an excellent resource for the school.

- Cynthia will contact the Nolumbeka Project to inquire about their interest/availability in assisting with information regarding historical use of land in Conway and historical and current cultural/spiritual relationship to the forests.

- Priscilla will contact the Ohketeau Cultural Center

Deb offered to contact National Heritage to request presentation for entire town.

Committee still awaiting report from AmeriCorps volunteer, Audrey:

- Deb noted that the Gaia GPS application can be used by the Committee to help with mapping.
- Suzanne will send letter to land owners of property abutting Fournier tract regarding inclusion in mapping and will request response via phone or email within 2 weeks, after which Suzanne will reach out if she has not heard back.

Mary Wigmore reported that she was asked to complete the update of the two forest management plans and as part of that process needs to conduct a walk in which she will point out strategies for optimizing forest resiliency, e.g. age and species diversity:

- A date of June 18, with June 19 as rain date, was agreed upon
- Mary to send out publicity and handle registration
- A 15 cap on participants, not including committee members
- Committee requested inclusion of following in revised plans:
 - Definition of resiliency
 - Consideration of environment around target property
 - Discussion of current climate conditions
 - Proforestation as a strategy

Discussed need for other town boards to consult with Committee regarding any forest-related matters and to appreciate that Committee has responsibility for monitoring all forest-related activities:

- Marilyn to invite Audubon representatives who appeared before Select Board and Véronique to next meeting.

Next Meeting Dates:

June 22, 6:30 pm

Meeting adjourned ~8:00 pm.