

# ***TOWN OF WAITSFIELD***

## **CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, October 17th, 2022; 6:30 p.m.**

### MINUTES

Members Present: Phil Huffman, Bob Cook, Curt Lindberg, Bruno Grimaldi, James Donaldson, Chris Loomis, Ted Joslin, Leo Laferriere

Members Absent: PJ Telep,  
Public in attendance: None

Lindberg opens the meeting at 6:35 PM

Review and Approve Minutes – Minutes of September 19, 2022 meeting. Discussion regarding “Other Business” agenda item regarding liability waivers for volunteers working on town lands. MOTION by Donaldson, seconded by Laferriere, to approve the minutes as drafted. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Wu Town Forest Trails – Loomis reports the estimate from Wood & Wood for signage for Wu town forest is \$1,500-\$1,600 but there is a mistake in the estimate which will need correcting before the final estimate can be provided. Provides further info on the specific types and utility of the signage contemplated. Recap of trail stewardship needs and assessment of trail conditions. Comments on Hastings road condition and parking situation. Commission generally in agreement with the signage plan.

Huffman joins the meeting at 6:45PM

MOTION by Grimaldi, seconded by Joslin to authorize the Wu Ledges Working Group to engage with Wood and Wood signs on behalf of the Commission to procure trail signage for Wu Ledges Town Forest at a cost of up to \$1,500. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Virginia Farley Memorial At Tardy property update: Huffman provides an update. Working on a budget for the project to be circulated to the commission. Expected to \$30,000-35,000 for memorial plus \$25,000 for a long term stewardship, for a total budget of \$60,000. Suggests keeping this item on the agenda for future meetings.

Highlights from Bill Mussen visit: Laferriere provides a report on the visit to inspect planting survival at Austin parcel and guidance on revegetating knotweed sites, including Tardy. Lindberg, Cook and Laferriere met with Mussen.

Discussion of knotweed strategies applied to date. Mussen provided a list of preferred species to use on Knotweed re-vegetation sites. Striving to find bio-degradable fabric to use on the “smothering” sites, so far this has not been successful.

Lindberg provides additional recap on Mussen visit to the knotweed project sites. Feedback was positive with successful results. Positive comments on Austin parcel site. Mussen feedback was that the survival rate was within a normal range. Suggested plantings within the Lareau knotweed sites in the next growing season. Suggested additional strategies, including mowing at Austin.

Austin Parcel fall planting plans: Lindberg provides an update. Upcoming planting effort will include removal of tree tubes and mark locations for additional plantings and replacement plantings. A good number of volunteers have signed up for the 11/29 stewardship day. Discussion of survival rate on plantings. Overall positive survivorship “higher than typical 50% rate”. Competition is mainly from native vegetation. Discussion of knotweed problem and potential actions to take on the actual river bank of the Austin parcel. Willow plantings likely most useful within riverbank setting.

ARPA Committee update: Laferriere provides an update. So far very few requests have come in. Proposals must be submitted on a specific form by a particular applicant. Discussion of potential project types has been occurring, waiting on further proposals. Outreach via typical media outlets is planned. Must be an identifiable project and entity to manage the project.

Financial Matters and 2023-2024 Budget planning: Grimaldi - Reviewed balances of various funds. No changes other than interest. Recap of funds committed from the FY2023 budgeted funds. \$2,773 of the \$5,000 operating funds are committed thus far. Lindberg and Grimaldi will get together to discuss FY 2024 budget request prior to the next meeting.

MOTION by Huffman seconded by Grimaldi to allocate the \$1,500 for Wu Ledges signage noted above to come from the FY23 operating fund. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Commission Roundtable: Reports from various members regarding visits to Town Forests since the last meeting. Parking continues to be a problem at Wu Ledges. Discussion of valley trails usage and development.

Other Business: Next meetings are November 21<sup>st</sup> and December 19th.

Discussion of town budget cycle and preparation of a proposal for WCC operating budget for FY24.

No reports from AVCC conference.

MOTION – By Loomis, seconded by Joslin to amend the meeting agenda to include an executive session. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION – By Laferrierere, seconded by Grimaldi to go into executive session. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Executive Session: Commission goes into executive session.

Commission comes out of executive session at with no action taken.

Other business continued: Cook reports on the Valley wide bear initiative.

Motion to adjourn by Cook, seconded by Grimaldi. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY