Ashland Town Forest Committee

DRAFT Minutes of January 21th, 2021 Meeting

Location: Online Meeting via Zoom

Members Present: Brian Forestal, Mike Jones, Robert St. Germain, Brian McGrattan

Members Absent: Jamie Tripp, Catherine Rooney

Public Present: Diana Morrissey

Call to Order 7:03pm

Request to permit falconry in the Town Forest

Ms. Morrissey introduced the Town Forest Committee to falconry and hunting with falcons. Mr. Jones questioned whether town regulations regarding hunting would apply. Mr. St. Germain questioned whether the same time-of-day restrictions for hunting with falcons would be in place. Ms. Morrissey described how hawks behave with respect to people and other animals, stating that there would be no danger to people or dogs using the forest. A motion was made to allow falconry hunting in the town forest conditional on approval of town counsel. The motion was approved on a 4-0-0 vote.

Emails received

Kevin Langmeyer noted leaves in the Oak St rain garden. It is suspected that the land maintenance company that services the apartments is blowing leaves over the swale into the brook. Mr. Langmeyer requested that Mr. St. Germain meet with the apartment managers to address this concern. The committee concurred that Mr. Forestal will write an email to the manager raising the issue.

Carl Hackenson wrote an email to the committee raising questions about the netting placed in the forest. He is referring to the recently created deer exclosures. Mr. St. Germain asked the boy scout who ran the project to put signs up. The signs placed did not tolerate the weather well. Mr. Jones will print and laminate signs that will stand up better. A motion was made to place five signs, four on each side of the exclosure and one near the trail leading to the exclosure.

Dick McColley, a resident on Oregon Road, noted that the Oregon Rd lot is often filled and people are parking on the street, creating traffic hazards. Possible solutions are to direct people to other lots (which are also often filled) or to expand the existing parking lot. No decision was taken to address this issue.

Review and Acceptance of December 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes, Jan 6 and Jan 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to accept the December 16, 2020 meeting minutes without changes. The motion was passed on a 3-0-1 vote (McGrattan abstained).

Two sets of minutes were produced for the January 6, 2021 meeting. Mr. McGrattan and Mr. St. Germain will merge the two sets. Further discussion was tabled.
Discussion of the January 10 meeting was deferred until the next meeting.

**Accounting Procedure**

Mr. McGrattan will send a prototype software tool to the committee to track budgets and inventory. Mr. McGrattan will continue to develop the accounting practice.

**Updates**

- Boundary marking - Markers have been received. Mr. St. Germain produced prototype nail grommets. Mr. McGrattan will identify key points to have surveyor mark in forest. A motion was made to charge the cost of the boundary markers to the CPC grant. The motion passed 4-0-0.
- SVT – no update
- Rain garden – Mr. Jones did some pruning.
- Yellow trail south bridge – no progress
- Letter to abutters – no progress
- Americorps grant – no progress
- Map update – Mr. Forestal is waiting for a final map to update electronic media. Mr. St. Germain will address the inaccuracies in the most recent map.
- Purple trail bridge – no decision was taken on replacing the larger and smaller bridges.
- New unauthorized trail tagged – Someone has tagged a new trail from the white trail to the purple trail. The committee will continue closing off any improvements. Mr. Jones will place "Keep on Trail" signs at either end.
- Trail cams. Mr. Forestal and Mr. McGrattan will meet at the rain garden on Tuesday to extract data, replace batteries and move trail cameras to the purple trail

**Review Facebook Posts**

None noted

**Budget review**

The committee reviewed the 2020 budget items requested as a basis for preparing a 2021 proposal. A motion was made to submit a proposed budget request totaling $31,250. The motion passed on a 4-0-0 vote.

A discussion has held on the installation of a power line pole on Winter St to eventually supply electricity to the shed. The estimated cost of the installation is $1,500. A motion was made to use existing funds in the DPW budget to install the pole. The motion passed on a 3-1-0 vote (McGrattan voted no).

**Next Meeting**

Feb 4, 2021 at 7:00 pm via zoom

**Meeting Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion passed 4-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.