Ashland Town Forest Committee
Minutes of March 10, 2021 Meeting
Location: Online Meeting via Zoom

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

Members Absent: Jamie Tripp

Call to Order 7:00pm

Review and Acceptance of February 24th, 2021 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Feb 24 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded and passed on a 5-0-0 vote.

Town Forest, Long Term Forest Study, Discussion
The committee concurred that this agenda item be removed.

Town Forest Info into Mailer, Discussion
The mailer has been deferred due to Covid. Discussion will be added to a future agenda when appropriate.

Review New Accounting Guidelines
Mr. McGrattan made little progress. He will provide a draft prior to the next meeting.

Updates

a. Boundary Markers Installation Progress – Mr. McGrattan reported that the boundary has been marked on the south and west sides of the forest from the Winter St parking lot to opposite Whippoorwill Dr on Oak St, and on the east side from Woodridge Rd to the Cowassock property border. Next step will be to continue north from Whippoorwill to the Oregon Rd parking lot.
b. SVT Walk in the Woods, June 6th Target Date – thus item remains a placeholder until the scheduled walk.
c. SVT Health Walk – no update
d. Rain Garden Mr. Jones reports that a revised list of materials has been prepared and submitted to the supplier. He will also create a letter to the Friends of the Forest requesting volunteers on May 15.
e. Yellow Trail South Bridge – no update
f. Review Letter to Abutters – preparation of a draft letter is underway by Mr. Forestal.
g. CPC Grant Release – the committee is expecting a CPC agreement letter.
h. Americorps Grant – Ms. Rooney reports that she is waiting for an update from Americorps intern Jonathan Haarstick.
i. Maps Discussion – no update. The next logical update for a maps discussion is following the next (but unscheduled) planning meeting.
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j. Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) Help Offer/Trail Flagging – we have until mid-April to decide which project (repairs to the white trail or a new north trail) the committee would like to pursue.

k. Utility Pole – the payment issue is resolved. Mr. St. Germain is trying to schedule the installation.

l. Trail Cam – the trail cam is due to be moved. A suggestion was made to install it in a location watching the Winter St entrance in an attempt to identify our ‘artists’ and to install the second camera at the four-way intersection.

m. All Terrain Utility Vehicle (ATUV) – the specifications were sent to the town administrators. We are now waiting for the bid to be sent. There was a discussion about potential deferring the purchase until the new model comes out, but the decision was made to pursue the purchase now.

n. Shed Electrical Scheduling – the installation is proceeding now. Mr. Jones incurred expenses for supplies of $262.43. A motion was made to approve the payment of the expenses, seconded and passed on a 5-0-0 vote.

o. <New Item> Graffiti – The graffiti on the Winter St sign was removed and the sign repainted at an expense of $100. A motion was made to approve the expense, seconded and approved on a 5-0-0 vote.

p. <New Item> Mr. St. Germain reports $500 from a prior grant has been approved for repurposing.

q. <New Item> At the request of a resident to allow falconry in the forest, the committee raised the matter with the town counsel. Per town code Chapter 153-2, Forest Rules of Use, hunting and trapping are prohibited. Falconry is considered a form of hunting.

r. <New Item> - the owner of the property at the end of Harrington, in response to a reported issue of construction washout into a brook, noted ongoing vandalism to his property, including trespassing and damage to a dog run. These activities may cause him to reconsider a right of way through his property to access some private trails.

Review Emails/Calls Received - none

Review Facebook Reports - comments were made about the plowing of the Winter St lot. Mr. Forestal will discuss with the DPW.

Future Budget Allocations and Purchasing Plans
We have no funds except the $500 reported in item 5-p above. A motion was made to table the discussion, seconded and passed on a 5-0-0 vote.

Sign Wording Finalization
   a. Private Property Sign – Mr. Jones will design and present to the committee.
   b. Forestry for the Birds Sign – Ms. Rooney reported that we have the signs and would like to put them up. Mr. Forestal suggested that there might be requirements for such a designation. Ms. Rooney will ask the state representative about the requirements for compliance.
   c. Mountain Biker Etiquette Sign, Wording – Mr. Forestal will revise the demonstrated signs to make them suitable for the forest.
d. Informational Signs – ongoing discussion about the needs and what constitutes too many signs.

**Sign Materials. Discussion** – Ms. Rooney will get prices on rigid, vandal-proof substrates for more permanent signs.

**Additional agenda items** (Future Projects Discussion, Non-Sanctioned Trails Discussion, Web Page Discussion, Create a List of Other Funding Sources and Assign to Members, Fixed Meeting Date Discussion) were deferred due to a lack of time.

**Meeting Close**

. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and was seconded. The motion was approved on a 5-0-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.

**Next Meeting** March 24th, 2021, 7:00 pm.

**Documents Referenced**

Town Forest Committee Agenda for March 10, 2021 meeting
Draft minutes of the ATFC February 24, 2021 meeting