



# Town of Ashland

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Ashland Town Forest Committee

#### Minutes of October 28, 2020 Meeting

Location: Online Meeting via Zoom

**Members Present:** Brian Forestal, Mike Jones, Robert St. Germain, Brian McGrattan, Jamie Tripp (Associate)

**Members Absent:** Catherine Rooney

**Call to Order** 7:00pm

#### **Review and Acceptance of October 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The October Minutes were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and passed on a 4-0-0 vote.

#### **Keeper of the Budget (Agenda Item 2)**

Mr. McGrattan proposed that, rather than appointing one of the committee members to maintain our budgetary documentation, we first develop a stronger approval, spending and recording process to enhance governance of the town's assets. As presented, each expenditure would require a project manager (requestor), approval (by committee or by chair) and posting by a single individual who maintain the accounts documents. Mr. Forestal will reach out to Ms. Rooney to see if she would be willing to maintain the accounts. If she is unwilling or unable, either Mr. Jones or Mr. McGrattan will take on this responsibility. Mr. McGrattan will more fully develop the proposed procedure for consideration by the committee prior to the next meeting.

#### **Email from Kelly Vaast (Agenda Item 3)**

Ms. Vaast requested that the committee consider acceptance of a donation of a bench in her husband's honor, in appreciation of his use and love of the forest. The offer is very much appreciated, but the ATF does not have a program to receive gift benches nor do we have a need for benches at this time. Mr. Forestal will respond to Ms. Vaast and suggest a donation to the ATF unrestricted fund.

#### **Updates (Agenda Item 4)**

- Boundary Markers - Mr. McGrattan reported that he had requested two quotations for boundary markers. There was discussion on the exact wording of how the URL should appear on the markers and "[www.ashlandmass.com/townforest](http://www.ashlandmass.com/townforest)" was agreed. The committee confirmed that it would prefer the two-color on white aluminum version, quantity 500, over other options (one color, plastic, qty 1000), provided the cost differential is small.
- Deer enclosure – Deer enclosure build Adam Rice is completed, additional discussion tabled.
- SVT Walk in the Woods – no update, scheduled for June, 2021

- Rain Garden – Mr. St. Germain will contact the DPW to see if the water meter should be removed prior to the forecasted low temperatures over the weekend.
- Yellow Trail Bridges – Mr. St. Germain reported that the Scout building the north bridge had completed the purchase of materials, will begin prep work this weekend. The Conservation Committee approved the order of conditions. Mr. St. German will register the document. The registration and publication fees are expected to be \$130.
- Review Letter to Abutters – tabled
- Americorps Grant – tabled
- Maps Discussion – Mr. Bill Moulton updated the files used to product the town forest trail maps to include the new Oak Street access and pink trail off Kings Row. Mr. Forestal is working with the town resources to purge older versions of the map from the town website and other places and replace with the new map.

### **Trail Camera Discussion (Agenda Item 5)**

At the last meeting, the committee agreed that the cameras will be placed at the Oak St and at the Oregon Road entrances. The cameras have not yet been installed. Mr. Forestal will contact Mr. McGrattan when he is available to place the cameras.

### **Sign Wording Finalization (Agenda Item 6)**

- Closed Trail Sign – The committee discussed the relative merits of closing a trail by placing a sign and noting the reason, closing a trail, and not noting a reason, and simply ‘disappearing’ the trail. By consensus, the committee decided that the best approach would be to brush over the trail and putting a ‘trail closed’ sign a few yards in from the trail head.
- Stay on Trail Sign – Mr. Forestal and Mr. Tripp noted that trails are appearing as short cuts and alternate paths at some locations. No decision was taken on how effective signage would be, and where it should best be located.
- Dog Waste Sign – A motion was made to accept the dog waste and dog leash signs drafted by Mr. Jones and post three signs per trail head. The motion was seconded and passed on a 3-0-0 vote. (Mr. Jones excused himself from the meeting earlier due to another commitment.)

### **Next Meeting**

November 11, 2020, 7:00 PM via Zoom

### **Adjournment**

A motion made to adjourn. Passed 3-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm

### **Document Referenced**

Town Forest Committee Agenda  
Meeting Minutes October 14, 2020