

Weathersfield Conservation Commission
Minutes
September 24, 2020

Present: Heather Shand, Roy Burton, Tyler Harwell, Jeff Pelton, Ryan Gumbart, and Cheryl Cox

Absent: Howard Beach and Ellen Clattenburg

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm.

Approval of minutes, August 2020 meeting

The minutes of August 27 were reviewed. Jeff added two names to the "Town Forest Discussion Items" so that the first sentence will read, "Stan Spencer, Eric Schutz, and Michael Bell, Ascutney Trail Association (ATA) members, attended the WCC meeting to discuss their involvement in the Weathersfield Town Forest." Jeff motioned to accept the minutes of August 27, 2020 with the corrected sentence and Heather provided a second. The motion then passed unanimously.

WCC sponsored EAB walk, September 26

Ryan and Roy will lead the walk. Roy made copies of photos of ash trees damaged by EAB for participants to keep. Jeff has posters to display plus tri-fold brochures and wallet cards for distribution. The WCC inventory will be available for participants to review.

Cheryl motioned to reimburse Roy \$12.00 for the cost of the photo copies. The motion was seconded by Heather and passed unanimously.

Possible budget spending

Fuel reimbursement for ATA trail clearing

Stan Spencer of the Ascutney Trails Association submitted an accounting of expenses for the blowdown and road opening to Jeff. Expenses are as follows:

Volunteer hours including permitting for SP access road	20 hrs	\$ N/C
JD5420 with Brushbull	10 hrs @ \$75	\$ N/C
Fuel	16.43 gal	\$ 42.71
Saw Gas/Oil	2.5 gal + oil	\$ 9.00
BB5000 blades (Townline)	2	\$154.01
BB5000 Clevis pins & clips, saw blades (Spencer inventory)		\$ N/C
TOTAL		\$205.72

Jeff will take a copy of the receipt signed by Heather to the Town Office for payment.

Town Forest discussion items

Signs/sign makers

Heather showed members the "Weathersfield Town Forest" sign made by Jason Berard of the Upper Valley Land Trust. Discussion ensued regarding placement as well as demarcation of the boundary. Heather proposed putting the sign at the spot where people enter the Town Forest from the State Park. Jeff said that eventually a larger sign displaying maps, etc. will be erected there, and the sign made by Berard could be mounted on top of it. Roy will ask Springfield Fence about a black locust pole to be used for mounting the sign.

Weathersfield/ATA Cooperative Agreement, continued

Ryan met with Brandon Gulnick regarding a Town Forest Working Group. Brandon suggested that the committee be made up of members from the various groups in town who could then report back to their individual organizations. Discussion ensued about the agreement. Tyler will rework the opening paragraph of the agreement, recognizing the fact that the Selectboard has the ultimate authority. Heather will meet with Brandon to get his feedback about the agreement.

Heather read a statement from Eric Schutz regarding the agreement. He was positive and excited to create a multi-use system unique to the area. More discussion about the use of the forest continued. Jeff said that we should recognize the history of this endeavor within the agreement. A short term trail plan giving ATA areas for mountain biking trails will help guide them in their planning.

Update of trail/landmark in name of Harry Temple

Tabled until next meeting

WCC sponsored workshop/hike ideas (ongoing)

It was decided to focus on possible outdoor programs due to the ongoing virus. Ideas suggested were a talk about the beaver deceiver by Skip Lyle, a talk about the weasel family that would tie into a winter walk, and a winter tracking workshop.

Other/new business

Jeff took Matt Keniston, a local builder, to the cabin in the Town Forest and asked him to evaluate its condition. An examination concluded that both the cabin and its outhouse need to be removed. A shelter with, perhaps, a picnic table could be constructed in its space. This could become a destination or a pause place.

Roy suggested that we purchase photo quality copy paper and donate it to the Town Office. This will be brought up at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm with a motion made by Jeff, seconded by Roy, and agreed by all.

Next meeting: October 22, 2020, 7:00 pm, location TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Cox