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Town of Mansfield
Open Space and Recreation Committee Minutes
June 29, 2020

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MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY USING GOTOWEBINAR PLATFORM

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Whereas both the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health have advised residents to take extra measures to put distance between themselves and other people to further reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19, Governor Baker has issued an order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Law c. 30A, §20.

In order to satisfy the Open Meeting Law requirements, today's Town of Mansfield Open Space and Recreation Committee meeting will be available to the public via GoToWebinar and Mansfield Cable. The instructions for joining via GoToWebinar are in the Meeting Notice on the Town's Website at www.mansfieldma.com and then clicking on today's date on the calendar.

Present: Diane Simms, Chair; Allen Bryer; Sharon Friedman; Rebecca Foster.

1. The meeting of the Town of Mansfield Open Space and Recreation Committee was called to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Trail activities updates:

Ms. Simms said Mark Cook, DPW Operations Manager, assigned Jay Beckett to walk the trails and flag the safety issues with surveyor's tape. In addition to the flagging, Mr. Beckett was to ascertain what level of skill was necessary to do the work. Since the last meeting, Ms. Simms and Mr. Beckett have walked four of the five properties; Ms. Simms said Sweet/Kalnins will be done at a later time. She said the Conservation Commission, Open Space & Recreation Committee and Mark Cook are looking for an on-going way of managing the trails.

On June 17th, Neil Rhein, the Select Board member assigned to the OSRC, invited Ms. Simms to a Select Board meeting, where she reviewed the pictures of safety issues with the board, stated there was a need for managing the trails and that DPW needed some guidance on who would be responsible for the work. She said the Select Board agreed with the OSRC concerns regarding the safety issues and said this should fall under DPW's purview. She said everyone agreed DPW would need a budget for the additional work. Mr. Cook suggested there be a meeting between Town Manager Kevin Dumas, Ms. Gonyer, Michael Healey, Conservation Commission Chair, Ms. Simms, Lee Azinheira, DPW Director, Lou Andrews, President of Natural Resources Trust and Colin Cauldwell, NRT Stewardship Director. The Conservation Commission felt Ms. Simms should have brought the Trail Management Plan to the Commission because they are legally responsible for the care and concern of the Mansfield Conservation properties. The outcome of the meeting was the Town Manager would put through a request to FinCom to allocate funds to be used by DPW; the Conservation Agent would manage the funds. Mr. Cook has contacted a tree company to start working on the safety issues. Ms. Simms said Mr. Cook asked for prioritization of the properties because the work needs to start before the 2020 fiscal year ends on June 30th. Ms. Simms said Corporal Hardy

would be done first, Marie Strese second and Great Woods third. She said Taylor's Hill has the most issues but the trees have not been taped, only numbered; this area will be done once the area has been fully taped. She said Sweet/Kalnins has not been assessed at this time by DPW. Ms. Friedman asked how much money was allocated for maintenance for this year and for 2021. Ms. Simms said \$20,000.00 has been allocated by FinCom but no money was given for next year. Ms. Simms said Ms. Gonyer will manage the budget and Mr. Cook will oversee the work. Ms. Foster asked if there was any role for volunteers to do some of the minor work; she noted Taylor's Hill is overgrown and asked if a volunteer group could go in and cut and widen the trails. Ms. Simms said she received an email today from a scout leader whose troop is interested in doing trail work for community service hours. She would like to discuss recommendations and policies at the July 27th meeting for soliciting and using volunteer groups, including scout groups and people under the age of 18. Ms. Friedman said it is possible to do this as long as everybody agrees to follow the CDC and State of Massachusetts recommendations for social distancing and mask wearing.

3. Review/update OS&RC 2020 goals:

- Prepare and Implement Mansfield Trail Management Plan.

Ms. Friedman said this would have to be collaborated with the Conservation Commission and DPW. Ms. Simms will add "in collaboration with Conservation Commission and DPW".

- Collaboration with town committees and certain community organizations.

Ms. Simms is the Conservation, Select Board and NRT liaison.

Mr. DiMascio is the liaison for DPW.

Ms. Friedman is the liaison for the Planning Board.

Ms. Foster is the school liaison.

- Enhanced Community Outreach.

Ms. Simms said she stopped the Mansfield Walks in March and will not resume the walks until she is more comfortable leading a group. Ms. Friedman said a more objective way to phrase this would be you are not going to do the walks now while the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is re-opening in Phase 2 and you will look at what the parameters are in Phase 3. She said it will be tied into the CDC, state and town guidelines and Ms. Simms feeling comfortable running such a walk. Mr. Bryer said it is a worthy goal and still has potential.

Ms. Simms said after the trail work is done, she will post updated pictures on some of the Facebook sites for community outreach and do things virtually through social media. This will remain as a goal.

- Execute pilot public education.

Ms. Simms said Mansfield Green was picked for the public education project. Ms. Friedman suggested tabling this goal until 2021. Ms. Foster agreed it would be better to do this at a different time. Mr. Bryer concurred because when it happens, the Committee will want to do it right.

- Semi-annual oversight of the objectives of the 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

This will be an agenda item next month to look at the charge and the responsibilities assigned in the 2016 plan. Ms. Simms suggested the Committee members review the plan and then make recommendations to the Conservation Commission. The OSRP plan is scheduled to be updated in 2023.

Ms. Friedman said the OSRC function is to comment on policies and procedures because their role is more to provide guidance and suggestions, not make decisions. She questioned what the responsibilities of the OSRC are, especially what properties are going to be acquired; she said this should be done by Conservation and NRT. Ms. Friedman said the OSRC should establish parameters from which they would review the Open Space Plan and make sure the objectives of the Open Space Plan are being addressed. Ms. Friedman noted the suggestions from Open Space are going to be included in the final draft of the Master Plan. Ms. Simms proposed revising the committee charge and parameters for committee review of the Open Space and Master Plan actions for approval by the Conservation Commission. Ms. Friedman asked that Ms. Simms send out an email with the proposed revised charge, to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Mr. Bryer said the pandemic has presented many challenges to every municipality, specifically to green spaces, and towns made blanket decisions rather rapidly that were contrary to the concept that you should not deny access to open space areas during this time. Ms. Simms said Ms. Gonyer posted signs at each trail head asking people to walk responsibly; she noted the recreation properties and fields were closed. Mr. Bryer said signs were posted at Memorial Park and the police department that all open spaces, including the trails, were closed. Ms. Foster said she did see these signs but the signs were there for only a short period of time.

4. Hiking scavenger hunt plan:

Ms. Foster said she thought using the trails for a scavenger hunt would be fun for people to do while practicing social distancing. She said one idea would be trail specific where people would have a map and a list of things to find on the trail; a more general scavenger hunt could be used on any of the trails and would be for pre-school and lower elementary school children and their families to explore and find different things. Ms. Friedman said she went on a sensory trail hike where you used your hearing and sense of smell and collected items along the trail to be used to make a collage. Ms. Foster said she was thinking of recommending different apps to help identify things found on the trails. Mr. Bryer said this is being done at Borderland State Park; he said this meets the OSRC charge and thought it was a great example of community outreach. Ms. Foster said she would use social media to let people know about the scavenger hunt. Ms. Simms said the information could be added to the town's Facebook page and to the OSRC page. She said she has posted information about Mansfield Walks on Positively Mansfield and Everything Mansfield; she will ask NRT if this information could be put on their Facebook page; she said often information posted on NRT's page gets pick up by Keep Mansfield Beautiful, which then gets used by the local Mansfield newspaper

The scavenger hunt will be finalized at the next meeting, July 27, 2020

Ms. Simms said the spelling of the Marie Streese/Strese Conservation Area will need to be checked.

5. Review meeting minutes for January, February, May:

Ms. Friedman made the motion to approve the January 9, 2020 minutes with Ms. Simms clarification that Open Space and Recreation Committee does not have a budget. Mr. Bryer seconded the motion.

Foster – in favor
Simms – in favor
Friedman – in favor
Bryer – in favor

Motion passed 4-0-0.

Ms. Friedman made the motion to approve the February 24, 2020 minutes. Ms. Foster seconded the motion.

Foster – in favor
Simms – in favor
Friedman – in favor
Bryer – in favor

Motion passed 4-0-0.

Mr. Bryer made the motion to approve the May 10, 2020 minutes. Ms. Foster seconded the motion.

Rebecca Foster yes
Diane Simms yes
Sharon Friedman yes
Alan Bryer yes

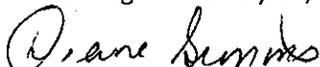
Motion passed 4-0-0.

6. Adjournment:

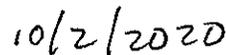
Motion to adjourn at 7:04 pm – (Friedman/Bryer).

Foster – in favor
Simms – in favor
Friedman – in favor
Bryer – in favor
Motion passed 4-0.

Next meeting will be July 27, 2020.



Chair



Date