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Town of Mansfield
Open Space and Recreation Committee Minutes
July 27, 2020

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MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY USING GOTOWEBINAR PLATFORM 9:52

Present: Diane Simms, Chair; Perry DiMascio, Vice Chair; Rebecca Foster; and Sharon Friedman.

The chair read the following notice:

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 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.

1. The Open Space and Recreation Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Reorganization:

Ms. Simms called for a motion to nominate for the position of Chair.

Mr. DiMascio motioned to nominate Ms. Simms for Chair for the Open Space and Recreation Committee.

Ms. Foster seconded the motion.

Mr. DiMascio – in favor

Ms. Foster – in favor

Ms. Simms – in favor

Motion passed 3-0-0.

Ms. Simms called for a motion to nominate for the position of Vice Chair.

Ms. Foster motioned to nominate Mr. DiMascio for the position of Vice Chair.

Ms. Simms seconded the motion.

Mr. DiMascio – in favor

Ms. Foster – in favor

Ms. Simms – in favor

Motion passed 3-0-0.

3. Trail Activities Update:

Ms. Simms said she has walked all the properties and confirmed all tree safety issues have been resolved on all five properties. The only safety issues are infrastructure issues; the bridge close to the trail head at Marie Strese and rotting logs just past the bridge on the White Trail in Great Woods.

Ms. Simms said Richard Alves, Town Engineer, went before the Conservation Commission on July 13th to present a proposal for off-street parking, with a total of 8 spaces, and the extension of an existing guardrail at Corporal Hardy.

Ms. Simms said she and Ms. Foster have completed the trail marking at Corporal Hardy. She noted, even though there were no safety issues on the Yellow Trail at Marie Strese, the tree company did work there because the trail was overgrown. She said because there are bridges at the trail heads of three of the properties, this precludes being able to get heavy equipment over the bridges. Mr. DiMascio asked if these are significantly wide wetland/stream crossings or could a steel plate be placed adjacent to the bridges. The steel plate across the subject wetland/stream would enable equipment to get across.

Sweet/Kalnins needs trail markers but the tree issues have been addressed. Ms. Simms noted Taylor's Hill had the most safety issues.

Ms. Simms said Noah Griffin presented a Boy Scout project for Taylor's Hill to the Conservation Commission on July 13th; part of the project is to re-open the existing trail along the river, with Google maps and aerial views of the property as well as signage.

Ms. Simms said the Select Board had talked about honoring Harry Chase, a historian and advocate for conservation land; the Commission suggested renaming Taylor's Hill "The Harry B. Chase, Jr. Memorial Wildlife Protection Area at Taylor's Hill".

Ms. Simms said there really are no safety issues at Great Woods but some areas are overgrown; she said the tree company took care of pine encroachment but there is still blockage on trails. She mentioned the Red Trail in Great Woods is very narrow because of embankments on either side of the trail, so it would be hard to get heavy equipment in this area.

Ms. Simms said Ms. Gonyer will meet this week with Jonas Bruggemann, a Conservation Commissioner and an employee at Mass Audubon where he does trail management plans, to get his input on the draft plan the committee reviewed. Ms. Gonyer also plans to meet with Mark Cook, DPW, about the trail management plan and then the draft will go to the Conservation Commission for review.

4. Update to goals:

Ms. Simms said at the last meeting the Committee decided to defer the education program until next year.

Ms. Simms proposed adding the goal, "propose revised committee charge for review by stakeholders". Ms. Simms said the charge will be revised, presented to the Conservation Commission for edits and approval and then presented to the Select Board for final approval.

5. Hiking scavenger hunt plan:

Ms. Foster said the main reason for the scavenger hunt is so people would look up the trails and learn about what Mansfield has to offer. She said she has drafted a commentary to be put on a social media post with a link with apps for identifying things in nature. She said this is an activity meant for all ages to enjoy while out exploring nature. Ms. Simms asked Ms. Foster to send a PDF of the final scavenger hunt information so it can be posted on the town's website; this would also be posted on the OSRC section as well as the town's Facebook page, Positively Mansfield, Everything Mansfield, Keep Mansfield Beautiful and on the Natural Resources Trust page, as well as websites Ms. Foster is associated with. Ms. Simms mentioned Mansfield News shares the postings for NRT and Keep Mansfield Beautiful.

6. Status No Dogs signs at the Mansfield Youth Baseball fields /Sweet Kalnins:

Ms. Gonyer has removed the sign at the entrance to the field and Ms. Simms said there is one sign that is very close to the start of the trails that should be removed. This will be a topic for discussion at the August 17th Conservation meeting.

7. Status National Lumber trespass issue

This is still being reviewed by town counsel. Ms. Simms will follow up in the fall.

8. Proposed procedures of trail work volunteers:

Ms. Simms said if volunteers will be doing trail work there should be some guidelines. Mr. DiMascio said safety and liability is a priority when volunteers are doing work on their own. He said this has been discussed with Mark Cook, Ms. Simms and Ms. Gonyer. He said the Committee should be proactive and make a list of what a volunteer can or cannot use for tools and equipment, as well as an approved activity list stating what work can and cannot be done by

anyone under 18. Ms. Foster agreed, but said the Committee should be more specific as to what the role of a volunteer would be. She said volunteers should not alter or add new trails. Ms. Simms said volunteers should only work on marked trails and volunteers would need to coordinate with the Conservation Agent or other town employees to get permission. Ms. Simms said volunteers should only work on existing marked trails and suggested including "no groups of 18 year olds or under without adult supervision". She asked if there should be a ratio of adults to any group of volunteers. Ms. Simms said volunteers 18 or under should not use power tools. She said we do not want volunteer groups working on over-hanging trees or trees of a certain size.

Mr. DiMascio said the Committee should be specific about what a volunteer can't do without supervision from DPW; he said this should be done on a case by case basis and the OSRC should address not only the use of power tools such as chain saws but also the use of an ax. He said there should be a list of things to use such as rakes, loppers, small hand clippers, hedge trimmers and small pruners.

Ms. Foster said there should be a list of approved things that can be done by volunteers; they can clear a path or remove trash. Mr. DiMascio said anything that can be picked up by hand such as small branches and debris can be done by a volunteer.

Ms. Friedman joined the meeting at 6:49 pm.

9. Potential recommended updates to Committee Charge

Ms. Simms said the charge was written in August 2017 and should be reviewed and discussed at the August meeting. She said the board is comprised of five members, each serving a one year term. She said Ms. Gonyer suggested changing this to a three year term; the Committee members agreed. Ms. Simms noted the Recreation Department has not appointed anyone to the OSRC and asked if the Committee should stay as is, Open Space and Recreation Committee or should it be changed to Open Space Committee. She said she would ask Ms. Gonyer if she had any more insight into the Recreation Department's interest in participating in the OSRC. Ms. Simms suggested it be the Open Space and Recreation Committee and have an annual outreach with the Recreation Department. Ms. Friedman said the OSRC was initially formed to help advise and to report back to the various boards from which the OSRC members were appointed; Ms. Friedman noted the Open Space has been incorporated into the Master Plan. She said it would be helpful to have someone from the Recreation Department on the committee. Ms. Simms asked the Committee to read over the charge and decide what should be stricken or added. She said it needs to be clearly specified this is an advisory committee to the Conservation Commission.

10. Old Business:

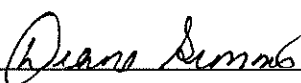
- Review June meeting minutes: Minutes will be voted on at the August 31, 2020 meeting.

11. Adjournment:

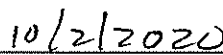
Motion to adjourn at 7:02 pm (DiMascio/Friedman).

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

Next meeting: August 31, 2020



Chair



Date