

Town of Mansfield
Open Space and Recreation Committee
August 31, 2020 Minutes

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MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY USING GOTOWEBINAR PLATFORM

Present: Diane Simms, Chair; Perry DiMascio, Vice Chair; Alan Bryer; Sharon Friedman; Rebecca Foster; Katelyn Gonyer, Conservation and Environmental Planner.

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 6:02 pm
2. Brainstorm Community Outreach.

Ms. Simms said yesterday she posted three pictures from the Corporal Hardy site of the area pond, which used to be a town beach, a picture of a cleared tree and a picture of the memorial at the entrance to the site on Positively Mansfield Facebook site and received 90 "likes". Today she posted the same information to the Everything Mansfield Facebook site. Ms. Simms said she is willing to go to a trail property every two weeks, take pictures and post to the Facebook sites. She asked if the other Commissioners had ideas to keep the town residents aware of the trail systems. Mr. DiMascio said during this time social media is probably the best way to get messages out to residents. Ms. Simms said another option would be for someone to write and submit an article for the Mansfield News.

Ms. Gonyer questioned whether there was the ability to have Facebook pages for individual committees because this would be a great way for other people to post pictures; she said she will find out if there is a difference between a "friends" and a "committee" Facebook page. Ms. Friedman asked what would be the purpose of doing this. Ms. Simms said community outreach is one of the OSRC goals. Ms. Gonyer suggested getting on Facebook in a more organized way and said the site could be called "Trails of Mansfield". Ms. Foster asked Ms. Gonyer if she was thinking of posting maps, apps and photos. Mr. Bryer suggested the Mansfield Patch and asked if, as a citizen, someone could choose to post, administer and sponsor a page; it could specifically say in the tag line "an official collection of information about the trails". Ms. Foster said she would be happy to do this as an administrator to an unofficial group that the OSRC could post to. She said it could be set up as a community place for other people to post. Ms. Foster noted a lot of the trails are not on the "All Trails" site but, when walking a trail, by pressing record, you can save and up load the information. She said she did this at Taylor's Hill and has a direct contact who will upload the maps. Ms. Simms will send this information to Ms. Griffin in the Town Manager's office so

it can be posted on the town's Facebook page as well as other entities in town. She will also ask Lou Andrews if she can post information about the trail systems on the NRT Facebook page.

Ms. Gonyer said she is talking with Mark Cook and spoke briefly with Human Resources about the volunteer process and the liability to the town and what volunteers can be allowed to do on town property. She said at this time there is no written policy but she has samples from other towns, which appear to be more of a release form. She said there would have to be clear language, approved by Town Counsel, in any document that a volunteer would sign when they do work on town property and it would have to be clarified as to what implements/tools can be used when volunteering. Mr. DiMascio said a release form would be a good starting point. Ms. Gonyer said the next thing to do would be to draft a volunteer release form and then have Town Counsel review it. Ms. Simms noted the Friends of Blue Hills has a waiver form and volunteers are only allowed to use hand tools.

Ms. Gonyer provided updates to the Committee on the infrastructure safety issues at Marie Strese and the White Trail in Great Woods. She said she will be meeting with the scout leader of Troop 51 at Great Woods tomorrow and will also talk with the scout leader about Marie Strese. Ms. Simms said she has been told the planks are getting worse on the bridge at Marie Strese; Ms. Gonyer said she will have DPW place a board on the bridge. She asked if the footings need to be replaced on the bridge and Ms. Simms said it is a very low and flat bridge, unlike the bridges at the other conservation properties, which are elevated. Ms. Gonyer said she will contact Mark Cook and Jay Beckett.

3. Maintenance Plan.

Ms. Gonyer will review the Mansfield Trail Maintenance Plan with DPW but will also make a year-round time line that shows month-to-month activities. She will have a draft of the Trail Maintenance Plan for review by the OSRC at the September 28th meeting.

4. Approval of June and July minutes.

Mr. DiMascio made the motion to accept the June 29, 2020 minutes as modified.

Ms. Foster seconded the motion

Mr. DiMascio – in favor

Ms. Foster – in favor

Mr. Bryer – in favor

Ms. Friedman – in favor

Ms. Simms – in favor

Motion passed 5-0-0.

Ms. Friedman made the motion to accept the July 27, 2020 minutes as written.

Mr. DiMascio seconded the motion.

Ms. Friedman – in favor

Mr. Bryer – abstained

Ms. Foster – in favor

Mr. DiMascio – in favor
Ms. Simms – in favor

Motion passed 5-0-1.

5. Committee Charge.

Ms. Simms said the Committee should be looking at the goals, what we have passed in the last two years, what is in the Master Plan pertaining to Open Space, and what the goals and objectives of the Open Space and Recreation Plan are and what is actually in the Charge now. She said the Charge passed on August 3, 2017 and now that the Committee has been operating for three years, this is a good time to talk about what should be in the Charge. She said the Charge does not explicitly say this is an advisory committee to the Conservation Commission; she said this should be made clear for future members of the OSRC that this is an advisory committee and be added to the Charge. She said to change the Charge, the Committee will make recommendations, Ms. Gonyer will include the Committee's recommendations in a draft and, once the Conservation Commission has reviewed the draft, the draft will then be sent to the Select Board for approval. Mr. DiMascio asked if Community Outreach should be a part of the Charge and Ms. Simms said yes, this should be part of Charge, in regards to the town's Open Space properties.

Ms. Friedman said her understanding was the Committee was to be an advisor to the Conservation Commission and she feels Community Outreach is a different type of activity, not advisory. Ms. Simms asked Ms. Friedman if she would prefer "educate the town about the Open Space properties" instead of "Outreach". Ms. Gonyer said outreach and education is exactly what the Committee needs to do and "advisory" should be outlined in the Charge more clearly. Mr. DiMascio asked if the Open Space Charge would potentially conflict with the Recreation Committee Charge. Ms. Simms said she envisioned Open Space as passive recreation and the Recreation Committee tends to do organized activities and events. Mr. DiMascio asked if the state mandates having an Open Space and Recreation Plan. Ms. Gonyer said it is not mandatory that a town have an Open Space and Recreation Plan but, by having an approved, certified Open Space Plan, it puts a town in line for public funding. She said the current Open Space plan will expire in 2023 and said the Committee should start to review the document. Ms. Simms said you can have an Open Space Plan but this does not mean you have to have an Open Space and Recreation Committee; she said the Recreation Committee and Director would update the recreation portion of the Open Space Plan and the Open Space Committee, as an advisory to the Commission, would provide suggestions for the Open Space part of the plan. Ms. Gonyer said there is an outline of procedures on how to create an Open Space Committee in the Open Space Hand Book; she will provide a link. Ms. Gonyer will talk with the Recreation Director about the potential changes to the Charge. Mr. DiMascio said the Committee should make sure Recreation does not need to be a part of the Open Space Plan in order to receive funding. Ms. Gonyer agreed. She said at some point the Committee should review the Open Space Handbook.

Ms. Simms said one of the bullet items, "maintain and update an inventory of the town Open Space and Recreational facilities", should be removed from the Charge; it is her view this is the town's responsibility to keep an inventory of town properties and not a part of an advisory committee to update and maintain

an inventory. Ms. Gonyer said this was done because an inventory of these properties was included in the original Open Space Plan. Ms. Simms said she does not have an issue with the second bullet, "work to establish a process for on-going review and updating of the Open Space and Recreation Plan as appropriate".

Ms. Simms said she feels the bullet point, "based on the findings of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, work with the Board of Selectmen and other relevant town boards, commissions and committees to maintain a list of targeted properties considered desirable for protection for various municipal uses", is not appropriate for the Open Space Committee to determine. Ms. Gonyer said this bullet point is antiquated and recommended it be removed from the Charge. She asked if it would help to draft what has been discussed so far with potential wording/language. Ms. Simms agreed this would be helpful.

Ms. Simms said she got some input from Nancy Griffin regarding the terms of the OSRC members. She agreed the members not appointed by another board/commission/committee should be appointed for three years. The term for members that are appointed by another board/commission/committee cannot be longer than one year; Ms. Simms noted your appointment cannot be longer than your term on the appointing board/commission/committee.

Mr. Bryer said his last meeting as a member of the OSRC would be in December. Ms. Simms thanked him for his service.

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn at 7:10 pm (Bryer/Foster)

Mr. DiMascio – in favor
Ms. Friedman – in favor
Ms. Foster – in favor
Mr. Bryer – in favor
Ms. Simms - in favor

Motion passed 5-0.

Next meeting will be October 1, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

Deane Simms
Chair

10/2/2020
Date