

## **Lee Trails Committee Minutes**

### **June 1, 2022 @ 7 PM**

**Present Members:** Deb Sugerman (Liaison/Chair), Martin Thornton (Secretary), Leslie Chinburg, Paul McComiskey, Chris Regan and Dennis Regan

**Approval of Minutes of April 28, 2022:** Chris Regan moved to accept the minutes. Dennis Regan seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### Reports

- Conservation Commission (CC) Meeting:
  - Dennis Regan reported: He made a presentation to the CC on improving the Transfer Station entrance to allow better safety for users of the trails at the busy entrance of the Transfer Station. The proposal would add a Split Rail fence for 24 feet on one side, and 32 feet on the other side of the road. A couple of dead trees would be removed to improve the access points. Cost would be about \$1900. The motion was made and seconded at the CC meeting. Under general discussion, there was a request to broaden input from other town groups that use the area. The CC is in favor once the other groups are contacted. The motion was tabled for that meeting. Dennis Regan will follow up with contacting Steve Bullek (DPW) and other groups and report back to the next CC meeting.
  - Deb Sugerman reported to the CC the success of the two Work Days that were held to clean up the trails in Little River Park (LRP), Maud Jones Memorial Forest (MJMF), and Town Forest (TF). There was a good turnout of volunteers and the planned tasks were completed.
- Deb Sugerman reported:
  - The QR code writing project draft was returned by Amanda Gourgue. It looks good on the computer but is not well formatted for viewing on a cell phone. She sent out the link to the Trail Committee for review and to come up with ideas how to adapt the format for better cell phone viewing.
  - The QR codes are posted at Little River Park. We should look at informing the public they are there and how to use them. Will look to do a Facebook and E-Crier posting.
  - Grants and paying for improvements: AARP grant - over 3,200 applications. Trail Fund grant - 291 applicants for \$50,000 (gave out 7 grants). We did not get either grant that was submitted. There was an overwhelming number of groups submitting grants and only a few awards. A general discussion was held on ideas how to pay for improvements from either donations or within the CC budget. We need to update the condition report on the trail bridges to set priorities. Martin Thornton will follow up on that task.

#### New Business

- Bridges – LRP Bridge building next week. Paul McComiskey and Martin Thornton will finish cutting up the lumber for the LRP and TF #4 bridges June 2. On Saturday, 4 June at 10 AM, Martin Thornton will bring the lumber on his trailer and Paul McComiskey will bring a four-wheeler and cart for transporting the wood to the site. We will bring wheelbarrows and a hand truck as well to move the lumber. The cement and other material will be taken to the site on Monday for construction. There was discussion on when we would start work Monday. Martin Thornton said he would be there by 7:30 Am, Leslie Chinburg said she would be available by 10 AM. Others will arrive as they are available.
- Naming TF trails – We have a name for the Bog Trail and Wheelwright Pond Trail. Other trails are referred to by the blaze color such as Yellow or White. There was an open discussion on what to call the Yellow and White Trails. Members are to give it some thought and report back at the next meeting. Some ideas that were discussed:
  - Yellow Trail: Round About, Walk About, Hemlock, Vernal Pool
  - White Trail: Cross Walk
- Select Board Meet, SRPC Mapping, Dennis Regan reported that at the last Select Board meeting he attended the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) gave a presentation on a project underway

to map trails in various towns. They are working on a link for bicycles between the Old Town Hall / Library and the DPW Building along Mast Rd. The mapping is being funded by a PUP Event. Some of their efforts on mapping recreational trails and usage may tie in with what the committee is doing on documenting the marked trails in town.

- Update of the By-Laws: Discussion was opened on adding a clause in the By-Laws on the participation level expectation for Members and Alternates. It is important for planning to have attendance at the monthly meetings so everyone is aware of what is happening and to help with organizing activities. Alternates need to be active to be able to substitute for regular members when they are not able to attend. The State does not allow for Zoom meetings. Work Days are harder to set attendance goals as some occur mid-week when people are working. Other participation may occur with small or individual work sessions such as wood preparation for build projects, sign making, Blaze and Trail updates, or work day preparations. The proposed amendment would be placed under Article 8: Duties of the Members. Per Article 15: Amendment of By-Laws, the proposed amendment is as below. A final draft will be sent out two weeks prior to the next meeting by Deb Sugerman. The amendment will be voted on in the next regular meeting.
  - Regular Members shall attend 2/3 of the regular meetings. Alternative Members shall attend 1/3 of the regular meetings. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a warning. Continued lack of participation will terminate the Member/Alternate's membership.
- Durham Great Bay Rotary Club presentation - August 10, 7:30am. Deb Sugerman reported that we will be doing a presentation before the Rotary Club on the Trail improvements and how they may be able to assist. They meet at the Friends Forever building on Morgan Way in Durham (off of Rt 4 near the Portsmouth town line). It was brought up to start thinking about what we would want to present.
- Bat Houses - Deb Sugerman reported that she had sent around a presentation on Bat House building and installing. There are Bat Houses in the Town Forest but they are not in a good location for bats and are not of the preferred construction. Better to have the houses near a field or stream. She is encouraging members to review the material and look at this as a possible future project for the REACH program or other community groups.
- REACH – Leslie Chinburg reported on the organization of the summer program. There will be 5 students participating this summer the week of July 5 to 7. Projects being lined up are: Library Cemetery clean up, LRP Bench, Clear Stone Walls, and visit the Lee Historic Society Museum. For the Cemetery Leslie Chinburg is contacting Jeff Liporto and Peter Hoyt to discuss the cleanup and repair of the fence. Dennis Regan reported on the research he has done to date on the possible origins of the cemetery with Randy Stevens. They ruled out a farmstead cemetery as there were no homes in that area. It was too far from the French and Indian War at Wheelwright Pond to have been used. There is a possible lead that the old Town hall building used bricks from an earlier Meetinghouse in that area. The Cemetery may have been used for destitute residents or possibly as a Black Slave burial. The 1770 census listed 4 Black Slaves in the town and the 1790 census did not show any. The last item was brought to their attention when they viewed a documentary on TV about Slave Cemeteries. Dennis Regan is following up with the Black Heritage Trail organization in Portsmouth.
- Dennis Regan reported that there was a presentation at the Select Board meeting by Richard & Maria Meyer on creating a Butterfly Sanctuary at the old Parish building. This would be a for profit operation and impact the trails in the area. He brought up the subject to make members aware of the proposal and impact on the Town Forest and trails in that area.

Next meeting date: 29 June 2022

Minutes submitted by: Martin Thornton