

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire  
**Board of Selectmen**  
Meeting Minutes – September 30, 2013

**CALL TO ORDER**

Present were Selectmen Nancy L. Carlson, Deborah J. Davis and Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy L. Carlson at 10:03 a.m. at the Carpenter Home at 2 Simeneau Lane. Also present were Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Baystate Forestry staff members Daniel Cyr and Jeff Snitkin

Led by Cyr and Snitkin, the Board viewed the Town of Swanzey’s ongoing logging operation on Mt. Caesar Forest property.

First stop was the property directly behind the Carpenter Home which contains an historical marker. Some of the trees had pink ribbon tied to them and those were the trees that are proposed to remain. Other trees in the area, including large pine trees, are proposed for removal at a later date. Snitkin and Cyr assured the Board that they would direct the logging operation per instructions from the Board. They explained the large pines in the area are susceptible to breakage under snow and ice conditions and by having the loggers remove the trees, the Town is saving the cost of individual tree removal should the need arise.

A discussion was held as to whether the logging operation was in accordance with the contract with the Town. Carlson felt that some of the operation in the field was not in keeping with the contract. Cyr responded that he has been following orders from O’Keefe, who he believes is in contact with the Board. Carlson said that it was her opinion that the field should not have been cut. The goal, she continued, was to provide an early-successional habitat, not a hay field. Cyr assured Carlson that the field would come back as a habitat and could be treated for invasive species of plants as well. He referred to a document name “Young Forest” published by the New Hampshire Fish & Game: [http://www.wildnh.com/Wildlife/Northeast\\_Hab\\_Mgt\\_Guide.htm](http://www.wildnh.com/Wildlife/Northeast_Hab_Mgt_Guide.htm) Cyr went on to say that it is a young forest that creates an early-successional habitat.

Davis expressed a concern about wetlands in the area and asked about silt fencing. Snitkin said that when there was a heavy rain back a few weeks ago, the skid trail became a river. The loggers did put in water bars. They also put in hay bales and silt fencing in especially wet areas.

Cyr said that he is going to shut the job down now until winter. He said the wood is wet and this leads to damaged wood with stains. Stained wood is sold for less money. He wants to wait until later when the area would have had a chance to dry out or freeze. An excavator will come in to smooth out the trails. The logging operation will continue during the winter months when it is cold and dry. Only 20% of the cutting has been completed thus far.

O’Keefe asked Cyr and Snitkin if a water bar might be placed on the main road up to the landing area in order to prevent water from approaching the Carpenter Home. Cyr said that could be done. He also suggested and asked permission from the Board to block off the trail in order to minimize disturbance from ATVs and other motorized vehicles. The Board mentioned that the City of Keene has a right of way

on the forest road for maintenance of the beacon light at the top of the mountain. The Board agreed that they will need to get in touch with the City of Keene to notify them of the road closure.

The Board walked up to where cut trees were stacked and Cyr pointed out red rot in some of the trees. He said that this makes the trees only suitable for pulp and not sawlogs and therefore worth less than Baystate had originally anticipated. He noted that red rot is often seen in wet soils. The Board was shown by Cyr and Snitkin how the road was raised over the low areas with cut saplings so that it could be driven upon. Cyr and Snitkin also mentioned that there is some danger to hikers and bikers on the road when logging equipment is there and they felt it is necessary to close the area to the public during operations. However, the Open Space Committee event planned for October 19, 2013 will still occur and the public will be welcomed. Snitkin and Steve Roberge will be conducting the tour of the operation but the logging equipment will not be present.

The Board was then shown into an area on the site where cutting has been completed. They saw young pines and deciduous trees standing in the area. Cyr pointed out young red oaks in the area which will now have more light to grow. Cyr also pointed out an area that is wet and will not get logged. The Board was able to observe some of the logging equipment. Cyr and Snitkin showed the Board where the cable is located that delivers electricity to the mountain-top airport beacon and noted that it should be permanently marked in some way.

The Board then visited the rock wall by the cemetery where more trees will be taken down if it can be done safely. There was a discussion regarding how much of a border the Board wanted to maintain adjacent to the stone wall, if any. The Baystate folks said they would need to have an answer from the Board by winter when they return to complete the job.

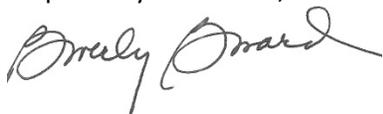
Snitkin asked about the pines at the Potash Bowl. Davis said that the Board needs to find out who actually owns the land there before they could discuss removal of the pines there.

The Board re-visited the area just west of the Carpenter Home to consider the size of the buffer of trees they would like to keep there. The area was due to be cut and there was about 40 feet remaining. The Board agreed that they wanted at least 20 feet as a buffer.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Davis, seconded by Colby, and all were in favor. Adjournment at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on October 8, 2013.