

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire  
**Open Space Committee (OSC)**  
Workshop Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2015  
Bridges Inn, 27 Main St. West Swanzey, NH

*Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place on the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.*

**Present at Meeting:** Chair Jeanne Thieme called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were Chairman Jeanne M. Thieme, Beverly Bernard, Bob McElvey, Theresa DiLuzio, Victoria Ames, Sharon Greatbatch, Karen Sielke, Judith Hildebrandt and Mary Farnsworth.

**Absent:** Deb Crowder and Selectmen’s Representative Kenneth P. Colby Jr.

**Others Present:** Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau

**Swanzey Open Space Committee Mission Statement:**

Your Swanzey Open Space Committee promotes the beautiful rural character and open space in Swanzey that we all love. We do this by bringing together landowners and land trusts and by providing the tools to assist in keeping land open forever. This benefits the landowners, their families and everyone in the community. All the work of your Swanzey Open Space Committee supports our town and its unique rural character.

There was a discussion about the mission statement and whether or not it reflects the objectives of the citizens of the Town and the Board of Selectmen and it was agreed that it was.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**Goal for workshop**

Plan and discuss implementation of OSC events/projects for 2015 as they align with our Mission Statement.

**Priority Setting**

Highest priority events were considered.

- Rail Trail - There was a discussion about the Rail Trail. DiLuzio suggested every other year for the Rail Trail event. DiLuzio suggested waiting until the new section is completed. It was decided to put the event on hold for now.
- Old Home Day is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in July and it was decided to continue to participate in that annual event.
- Walk for Animals was considered. Ames said that she was ambivalent about whether to be there or not and she suggested that there be more publicity about the role of the oxen as ambassadors of Open Space. Thieme mentioned that the Humane Society always asks the Open Space to participate with the oxen and therefore it is difficult to refuse. The event is scheduled for June 20, 2015. Thieme anticipated that they will ask once again and it can be discussed at a later date.
- Belding Field events - Other annual events that happened in the past were discussed like the oxen birthday party. The discussion included use of Belding Field for this kind of celebration.

DiLuzio suggested adding a hike staged out at a different time from the visit with the oxen. Most Committee members decided that they wanted to have a separate hike from an event with the oxen at Belding Field.

- Tom Wessels walk was discussed. Thieme mentioned that his program runs for a half day usually it is either from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. with a slide presentation and a two-hour hike included in the half day. Thieme said his usual fee is \$600 and he gets paid for his hotel and transportation; however Wessels would be willing to do it for \$200 with a tax letter acknowledging his donation. Carbonneau said she didn't see any problem with providing a tax donation acknowledgement to Wessels. Thieme mentioned using Carroll's Hill as a possibility for the hike after the presentation. The Committee agreed on doing a Wessel walk and to plan it for September 2015.

**Motion** by Bernard to expend funds of not more than \$600 to arrange for a program with Tom Wessels in September, 2015 and there was a second by Greatbatch, and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Thieme said she would make the arrangements for the Wessels presentation.

- New Hampshire Humanities Council presentation - The next event discussed was the Cellar Hole presentation and whether or not the OSC wanted to do another. DiLuzio suggested October for a Stone Wall presentation. Carbonneau also suggested early November might be a possibility. The Committee was in agreement as to providing a New Hampshire Humanities Council presentation on Stone Walls to be held in October 2015 or early November 2015.

Hildebrandt **moved** to expend funds of up to \$400.00 to book a Stone Wall presentation sponsored by the New Hampshire Humanities Council, second by McElvey, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

DiLuzio and Sielke volunteered to Chair the Stone Wall presentation and make the arrangements.

### **Children Events**

Thieme asked the Committee to talk about children and how to include them in OSC events. Sielke spoke about the idea of adopting a class of children and the possibility of having a bird feeder outside a classroom. She also suggested using the outdoor areas around the school as a way to promote open space with children. Discussion included the work involved in securing a teacher and how teachers are locked into curricula which makes it difficult to plan for something new. Ames suggested working with the Physical Education teacher to possibly plan a program for teaching children how to drive a team of oxen. The Committee agreed that the next school year (beginning at the end of August 2015) would be the best time to start a program with school children. Thieme said she worked with the after-school program and gave the Committee some insight into activities at the middle school. Ames will investigate into working with a classroom of kids to learn about oxen.

Greatbatch spoke about the possibility of having a treasure hunt in the summer with the Swanzey Lake daycare children. Greatbatch will investigate a day at the Recreation Center by contacting Recreation Programs Director Judy Bohannon.

**Buttons** - There was a discussion about the possibility of highlighting the history of our buttons as OSC launches its new "Bright" button. One suggestion was to give out buttons at the Deliberative Session. This could be a way of sharing OSC history with folks. Thieme mentioned that she would like to recommend the artist who painted the image of Bright. Hildebrandt suggested a poster that spoke to origin of the buttons and the artist. Carbonneau said that a poster and handing out buttons might be inappropriate at the Deliberative Session. The Committee decided to forego buttons at the Deliberative Session. Thieme mentioned that the new button could be on the face of 2015 postcard of OSC 2015 scheduled events.

**Motion** was made by Greatbatch to approve an expenditure of up to \$60.00 for thank you flowers to send to the artist who created the Bright button image, second by McElvey, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

**Presentation on History of Conserved Land** - Carbonneau suggested a PowerPoint presentation on the history of conserved land in Swanzezy that could be offered to the public on a Saturday morning with donuts and coffee to attendees. There was discussion but no decision at this time.

**Communication with other Committees** - it was suggested that once the OSC schedule of activities for the year has been formalized the OSC plan a special meeting with other Swanzezy committees who share an interest in the OSC activities from a conservation or economic development point of view. There was some discussion on this idea but no decision made at this time.

**Postcard** - The Committee agreed to produce a postcard with the Bright button on the face of the postcard with 2015 scheduled OSC events on back. The postcard will be delivered to all Swanzezy zip codes.

**Celebration of Dedication of West Swanzezy Park** - was agreed upon to participate, but without a firm date for the dedication of the park, it could not be placed on the calendar.

#### **Snowshoe Hike**

McElvey said he was willing to Chair the hike, and the Committee agreed to sponsor the hike in either February or March.

#### **Yale Trail Hike**

Farnsworth said she was willing to Chair the hike, and the Committee agreed to sponsor the hike in April.

#### **Mt. Caesar View**

DiLuzio suggested sponsoring a work party to cut some trees and shrubs at the top of Mt. Caesar to enhance the view. The Committee agreed to sponsor a work day.

#### **Dumping on Conserved Land**

DiLuzio said she had been contacted by Emily Hague from the Monadnock Conservancy about properties that are being dumped on and whether the Committee could come up with a plan to monitor the land. DiLuzio said that Hague was concerned about West Hill and dumping that is occurring there. During the discussion that followed it was suggested that the Conservation Commission be asked to invite Hague to

discuss it further with them as the members of the OSC felt that this concern was more pertinent to the activities of the Conservation Commission.

#### **Updating town website**

A discussion was held regarding updating the website. Carbonneau suggested that the Committee members need to provide the appropriate content which she and Coleen Birmingham can place on the website.

#### **Facebook**

There was also a brief discussion about the Facebook page and Bernard said that she would post any content provided by the Committee members including photos.

#### **Land Acquisition Account**

Thieme said that after some research by Bernard it was learned that there isn't an easy way to determine the history of expenditures from the Land Acquisition Account. Thieme provided a list of benefits that she can refer to instead of a history of expenditures should any citizen ask about the account and why the Town funds it. Carbonneau mentioned that the authorization to expend funds from the account comes from the Board of Selectmen.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hildebrandt **moved** to adjourn, and the motion was seconded by Farnsworth, all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Next meeting is February 11, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

Adjournment occurred at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary