

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Open Space Committee (OSC)
Meeting Minutes – July 8, 2015

Present at Meeting: Chair Ames called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. Present were Karen Sielke, Sharon Greatbatch, Jeanne Thieme, Mary Farnsworth, and Alternate Theresa DiLuzio.

Absent: Alternate Deb Crowder, Selectmen’s Representative Ken Colby, Bob McElvey. The Chair seated DiLuzio for McElvey.

Others Present: Conservation Commission Chair Wally Smith.

Acknowledge the resignations of Mary Farnsworth and Beverly Bernard. Members expressed their regret at these resignations, their gratitude for Farnsworth’s and Bernard’s many contributions, and wished Farnsworth and Bernard well. The Chair passed out gifts to Farnsworth and Bernard in thanks for their service to the Town.

Minutes:

Thieme **moved** to accept the minutes from June 10, 2015 and Sielke seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.** There was a brief discussion about the format of the minutes and members asked for Rich Text Files, or Word files, in addition to PDF files.

AGENDA ITEMS

Honey Hill Access Issues

Ames said that Tina LaBarre had addressed issues regarding access to Town-owned land adjacent to LaBarre property with the Conservation Commission at their July meeting. Ames suggested that OSC members may want to consider:

- Relocating the OSC map box to the Town-owned parcel that provides access to the Honey Hill trails. It was noted that Tina LaBarre said that her family has no objection to the box remaining where it is on their land.
- Revising the trail map to help hikers understand how to get to the trailhead.
- Adding language to the trail map to encourage hikers to be good neighbors to the LaBarre family.

The members examined a survey map of the land and Ames said action could be taken at a later date.

EVENTS AND EVENT PUBLICITY

Discussion was held regarding preparations for the July event. Ames passed out a document written to parade participants which included parade lineup information. Ames asked the Committee to consider paying for trucking the oxen back to their home field, because she lacks an experienced helper to walk them home.

Motion was made by Thieme to approve \$100 to truck the oxen back to Belding pasture. Brief discussion was held about where the oxen will be housed; there was a second to the motion by Sielke, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

July event (responsible member): Old Home Day & parade (everyone)
Purpose: to promote rural character and the protection of important open land
Date, time, location: Saturday, July 18; 9:00 – 2:00; Swanzey center
Parking: Mt. Caesar Elementary
Suitable for ages: all
Exertion level: low
Special equipment: trucking for oxen; table & chairs, literature, buttons, flowers

Discussion continued regarding outfitting and staffing of the OSC booth at the event .. Members agreed to display the map of favorite town places and the OSC banner, as well as to provide buttons, brochures, and trail maps. Sielke and Greatbatch volunteered to set up and Sielke volunteered to pick up the OSC banner, brochures, nametags and buttons at Town Hall. Greatbatch will get supplies from Thieme. Set up at 8:45 a.m.

Coverage at the booth -
First shift: DiLuzio
Second shift: Sielke
Take down: DiLuzio and Thieme

REPORTS

Monadnock Humane Society Walk for Animals. Sielke and Thieme gave a brief summary of the event, stating that it required relatively little effort and was worthwhile for OSC participation in the future.

DISCUSSIONS

Swanzey Lake Pavilion suitability for September 27, 2015 “Reading the Forested Landscape” slide show component of Tom Wessels’s presentation. Following June 25 OSC visit to check out the space, Greatbatch said the location is suitable, even ideal, and she mentioned that the only red flag would be that there is no heat, and it is possible that folks might be cold if the day is chilly. Greatbatch also said the facility has a lot more pros than cons. Discussion also occurred about whether curtains would be needed to darken the room.

Motion was made by Greatbatch to approve use of the Swanzey Lake Pavilion for the September 27, 2015 presentation by Tom Wessels. There was a second by DiLuzio, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Thieme mentioned needing to plan the hike at the Gomarlo property. Discussion continued on the amount of time to allocate for the presentation and for the hike. The event is tentatively scheduled from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Members expressed interest in maximizing the amount of time spent with Wessels on the hike.

Motion was made by Thieme to spend up to \$30 to purchase a gift for the Gomarlos, second by Sielke, and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

OSC participation in celebration of the completion of another 2000’ of the Ashuelot Rail Trail, per invitation from project manager Bruce Bohannon and Director of Planning and Community Development

Sara Carbonneau was discussed. Ames asked the members if they would like to be part of the celebration. The date is August 1, 2015 at 9 a.m.

Thieme **moved** to support participation in the celebration of another improved section of the Rail Trail, there was a second by DiLuzio. Greatbatch said she does not have the time to put any work into this project. Ames acknowledged the Committee does not know what is being asked of the group but said her impression is that the organizers would like to include the OSC. Discussion was held about accepting an invitation to attend the celebration, but noting that the ability to help is limited. Ames will research further. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Membership in the OSC

Ames said that there are vacancies for two full members and two alternates. She noted that the members of the Conservation Commission have decided to attend OSC meetings on a rotation; because these members would not be appointed as OSC members by the Board of Selectmen, they would not be able to vote on OSC matters. OSC members reviewed a spreadsheet of qualities that potential new members might already have or wish to develop. Members agreed to think about people the OSC might recruit to fill the vacancies.

Orientation/White Paper

Ames spoke about an orientation white paper developed for incoming OSC members to clarify roles and responsibilities of the Conservation Commission and OSC. She noted the distinctions between the functions of the Conservation Commission and the OSC and spoke about the origins of both. As an example, she said that the Conservation Commission is charged with monitoring land protected under the LCIP program, which is why the Conservation Commission has been involved in managing access to the LCIP-conserved Honey Hill trails. Thieme mentioned that a local timbering operation is upsetting people and said that she has been approached by residents who don't understand the difference between the Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee. She suggested that perhaps the white paper could be handed out to residents to clarify the different roles of each committee.

Conservation Commission meetings

Ames said that she attended the July Conservation Commission meeting and reported to the SCC on recent OSC events. She said the SCC continues to discuss the West Hill project. She said that the Town began its involvement with protection of the California Brook watershed since 1999, when SCC members joined the California Brook Working Group. She said that the Monadnock Conservancy's acceptance of ARM funding not only expedited the West Hill project, but also freed staff to pursue additional projects.. She summarized the hunting issues involved.

Ames reviewed with the members of the committee a summary of the Monadnock Conservancy's qualifications and experience, noting that the Conservancy was the first accredited land trust in NH, regularly renews its accreditation, and has completed over 200 easements. She said that its executive director also serves as president of the NH Land Trust Coalition, putting him in regular contact with the majority of conservation easement experts in the state. In regard to the Conservation Commission's desire to be involved in the writing of easement agreements, Ames said that the Monadnock Conservancy encourages all collaborators to work together on the effect of the easement wording. Ames spoke about the value of having a strong relationship with the Conservancy and asked the

members to consider a policy statement which articulates existing OSC practices when working with the Monadnock Conservancy. Members briefly reviewed the statement, and agreed to consider it in more depth at a later meeting.

DiLuzio reminded members about the OSC's practice of assigning a project manager to each easement project. Ames asked DiLuzio to be OSC project manager for the conservation easement that has been initiated by the Nature Conservancy, with the support of the Monadnock Conservancy.

Motion was made by Ames to name Theresa DiLuzio as the OSC project manager for the conservation easement that has been initiated by the Nature Conservancy, with the support of the Monadnock Conservancy. There was a second by Sielke. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

DiLuzio reminded the group of a particular piece of property she has long felt to have high value for conservation, and asked the group to consider exploring ways to approach its owner. DiLuzio suggested a sub-committee to gather information. Greatbatch said that a personal approach has been used in the past, not a committee, and said that the OSC had rarely solicited specific land owners to consider conservation. Members agreed to discuss the general idea of soliciting specific land owners, as well as the specific merits of the parcel under consideration, at a future meeting.

OSC Business Card

Prices per Gem Graphics: 250 cards: \$55 500 cards: \$65 1000 cards: \$75

Number of business cards I anticipate handing out in 1 year:

<u> 10 </u> Karen Sielke	<u> </u> Sharon Greatbatch	<u> 0 </u> Jeanne Thieme
<u> 0 </u> Theresa DiLuzio	<u> </u> Bob McElvey	<u> 0 </u> Victoria Reck Ames
<u> ?0 </u> Ken Colby	<u> </u> TOTAL	

Ames said she wasn't sure that a business card was appropriate for the OSC, because the group doesn't function as a business. Thieme said she thought she wouldn't use them but would give out postcards instead. This topic was tabled for now to be re-visited at the next meeting.

FOR INFORMATION

July 17 – 19: Work on the Ash Swamp Brook Bridge on the Ashuelot Rail Trail, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Bring a hammer, bug repellent and gloves, and lunch if you can help all day. Water will be provided. Directions: either walk in from Krif Road (park by the entrance to the KSC Athletic Fields) or come in from the Riley Conservation area and drive to the Rail Trail. Please contact Bruce Bohannon if you are able to help: 209-2353 (cell), 357-3340 (home), Wa1yzn@yahoo.com, bbohannon@town.swanzey.nh.us

July 22: Monadnock Conservancy Executive Director Ryan Owens, "Conservation Movement Today," 7:00 p.m., Historical Society of Cheshire County, 246 Main Street, Keene

July 30 – 31: Land Trust Alliance New England Land Trust's Excellence Retreat, Stowe, VT. Along with Monadnock Conservancy Executive Director Ryan Owens and Land Protection Director Anne McBride, MC Board member and Lands Committee chair Victoria Ames will attend this session for high

performing land trusts. Topics will include community collaboration trends in northern New England, and new trends in land trusts' practices.

Saturday, August 1: Rail Trail celebration, beginning at 9:00

August 5: Charlotte Wharton, "Sense of Nature," 7:00 p.m., Historical Society of Cheshire County, 246 Main Street, Keene

Saturday, August 22. In the morning, the Monadnock Conservancy's annual celebration will take place at the Dublin School. In the afternoon, the Whitcomb Hall barbeque--this year, to feature consideration of ways -- feet, strollers, bikes and more -- to expand access to Town streets. DiLuzio said she thought the Barbecue was August 28th. Ames will check on the date.

Jeannie Thieme's paintings of conserved land will be on display at the Historical Society of Cheshire County through September 5. The show is co-sponsored by the Monadnock Conservancy and other partners.

Greatbatch thanked Smith for attending the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: August 12, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Ames **moved** to adjourn; Sielke seconded the motion and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**
Adjournment occurred at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary