

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Open Space Committee (OSC)
Meeting Minutes – May 15, 2013

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 5:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Jeanne Thieme, Bob McKelvey, Judy Hildebrandt, Beverly Bernard, Sharon Greatbatch, Selectmen's Representative Kenneth P. Colby Jr., and Mary Farnsworth.

Absent: Deb Crowder, Theresa DiLuzio

Minutes: Minutes of April 10, 2013 and Minutes of March 13 were approved by roll call.

Rail Trail Bike Ride

Greatbatch passed out a summary for the plan for bike/walk which will be held on June 30, 2013. She informed the committee that the event will be publicized in the Old Home Days booklet. McKelvey said that he would be willing to be on the committee.

The project will need funds for advertising, beverages, promotional materials. Hildebrandt said that the committee has some funds to cover some of it. Hildebrandt suggested someone narrate a history of the trail as part of the event.

Motion by Thieme, second by McKelvey, to sponsor the Rail Trail Bike Ride. All were in favor. *Motion passed.*

Spring Celebration (Walk for Animals) June 22, 2013

Thieme gave a summary of the plans for the Walk for Animals event. She reported the site on airport road is perfect for the event. There will be a big tent on the grass by the parking lot. The parking lot in front of the Indian restaurant will be parking for walkers. The Open Space Committee's Ambassadors of Open Space protection, Jesse, James, and Bright will be there to greet participants. The plan is to have registration at 9:00 a.m. The walk starts at 10:00 a.m., and the order of the walk is Humane Society banner first, then oxen, followed by the Open Space banner, and then the rest of the walkers. Plan also includes lunch and live music; with an award ceremony at 1:00 p.m. Farnsworth asked if someone will be doing photos with the oxen. Thieme said not that she knows, but committee folks are needed to monitor the oxen and children around them. We can bring our table, maps, brochures, etc. The event ends at 2:00 p.m.

Bernard is planning to be there and will be there from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Farnsworth will also plan on being there from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Master Plan Update

Farnsworth had provided questions to the committee for consideration to help update the Master Plan. The draft that the committee will put together will go to the Planning Board first and then eventually to a Public Hearing. A discussion was held regarding aspects of the master plan that the committee should respond to. It was agreed that the Open Space Committee's Mission Statement provides the focus and goals for preservation of the Town and the Town's character. Uses of the trails are posted at trail heads and will be added to the plan. The character of the lands under easement is site specific. What is common to the properties are the unique qualities of each piece of land.

Old Home Days Update

July 20, 2013 is the scheduled date for Old Home Days. Hildebrandt suggested we use the map with pins for favorite places in Swanzey. We can have trail maps, buttons, brochures, and we will be located on the east side of Route 32. Having children participate in the parade was something that the committee did last year. Thieme contacted parents the week before the parade to invite them to join. Farnsworth suggested flyers to invite children to show up. We can post notices at the library. Bernard volunteered to create oxen flyers that can be used as bookmarks and given away at the Town library. Greatbatch offered to contribute little American flags for the children at the parade.

Full Moon Hike

Bernard and Thieme suggested using a field at top of Honey Hill. We would need vans at the top to get folks back down the hill when night falls. Colby said that Mt. Caesar could be a possibility but the loggers will be working there. Thieme and Bernard will visit Honey Hill to research the possibilities. (After the discussion regarding the possibility of getting a logger to speak about logging and forest management which is documented below, it was decided to postpone this event to some future date.)

Speaker Update

Thieme noted that forester, Steve Roberge, offered to lead a hike on Mt. Caesar to explain some of the logging and forestry management that will be taking place there this summer. Colby pointed out that the logging work is being managed by Bay State Forestry and the committee needs to coordinate any speaker we engage with them. Bernard offered to speak to Brian Johnsen, who is managing the project for the Town and give him a general idea of what we are thinking of doing. The committee would like to combine a talk on logging and forest management with a hike at the same time. Bernard will contact Johnsen to discuss and report back to the committee.

Conservation Commission Report

Bernard gave a brief report on the Conservation Commission's discussion of invasive species control and plan to work with the timber harvest folks to see what can be done about invasive species plants in the area. She also informed the committee that the Conservation Commission had reviewed Steve Stepenuck's report on river access for canoeing and kayaking.

Alternate becoming a full member

With the resignation of member Farnsworth will apply to become a regular member of the committee. Thieme reported there will be another Alternate position open at this time.

Demolition on West Swanzey Athletic Association (WSAA) building

Colby informed the committee of the plans for demolition of the building and said he wanted the building to be down by July 1, 2013 but that might not happen. Once the building is gone, this committee can be involved in the subsequent development of the land into a park. Jeff Goller, a member of the Planning Board and landscape architect has offered to help. The WSAA has offered benches for the park.

Conservation Map

A brief discussion was held regarding the need for an updated map of all the conserved areas in Swanzy.

Update on Deb and Jean

Deb is making progress and has been moved to Maplewood in Westmoreland. Jean is home.

Other items

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Thieme, seconded by Greatbatch, all in favor. Adjournment at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary