

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Open Space Committee (OSC)
Meeting Minutes – June 11, 2014

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 Thieme called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Present were Chairman Jeanne M. Thieme, Bob McElvey, Beverly Bernard, Theresa DiLuzio, Karen Sielke, Sharon Greatbatch, Alternate Victoria Reck Ames, Alternate Judith Hildebrandt and Selectmen's Representative Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. Mary Farnsworth joined the meeting at 5:13 p.m. Ames was seated for Crowder.

Absent: Alternate Deb Crowder

Others Present:

Mike Morrison from the Swanzey Conservation Commission

Minutes:

Sielke **moved** to accept the minutes from May 14, 2014 and Farnsworth seconded the motion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Thieme informed the Committee that their screen, projector, tent, and banners can remain in the attic at Town Hall, but the rest of the materials will be stored out of the attic in a lower level cubical. DiLuzio noted that the digital picture frame has been returned to Town Hall and is with the materials in the cubical.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. C&S Report

Ames, Sielke and Thieme attended this event. Ames told the Committee about her interaction with a young man from C&S who is interested in helping out with the oxen. He is willing to help out with the Walk for Animals event. Ames said there was some success in touching this person. Sielke said there were few people in attendance. Thieme suggested that OSC not participate in this event again since it was not appropriate for open space protection.

2. Trails Postcard Update

Sielke and Farnsworth passed out examples of the postcard to be sent to residents. The Committee members praised Sielke and Farnsworth for the quality of the postcard and thanked them for their work to produce it. Thieme pointed out the next step is planning for mailing the postcards. Ames said there is a book in the Assessing Coordinator's space that provides information for bulk mailing. Ames volunteered to help DiLuzio with acquiring the labels. Also help is needed for sorting. 5,000 postcards were ordered and will be mailed to approximately 3,000 homes. Extras will be given out at Old Home Day. Ames volunteered to make an OSC version of the post office rules for bulk mailing.

Greatbatch mentioned that there is a need to replenish trail maps at the boxes at the trailheads. There isn't a box at Dickinson Forest. It was agreed to post a box at the site and provide a map

for the trail at Dickinson, not a full scale brochure. Discussion was held about parking at the Muster Field/Dickinson Forest. Morrison said there is a concern regarding an erosion problem on the trail and it might not be a good idea to drive down the dirt road to the area. Morrison said that there is a plan to remove the rusty tower from the Muster Field. Sielke volunteered to get a trail map box from Greatbatch and put up the box.

DiLuzio reported that the Monadnock Conservancy and Harris Center will be conducting walks at Tippin' Rock and Honey Hill.

3. Walk for Animals

Thieme discussed plans for the event with the members. Oxen are usually there between 7 and 8 a.m. Walkers come at 9 a.m. Setup includes a table and tablecloth, and buttons should be made available. The date is June 21, 2014. Sielke volunteered to walk and follow oxen for "poop patrol". Farnsworth and Hildebrandt will be there. Thieme noted that the event is usually done by 2 p.m. Farnsworth offered to make a poster inviting children to join the OSC at the Old Home Day parade.

4. Rail Trail Event

There was a discussion regarding the work to be done at the Cresson Bridge for fire suppression. The bridge work will be occurring this summer, but no one was sure about whether the parking lot at the river will be occupied by construction. Colby opined that perhaps the construction crew will use the bridge itself for construction trailer since it will be closed to traffic. August 2nd is the date for the Rail Trail event, starting at 9 a.m. and the Committee is hopeful to use the parking lot at the river for the event. McElvey, Sielke, Kenny and Sharon Greatbatch, and Bernard offered to help with the event. Meeting will be planned for end of June or first of July. Greatbatch will inform the members of the actual date once she has chosen one. Ames suggested informing Rail Trail Administrator Bruce Bohannon of the event. A brief discussion was held about the work to be done on the Rail Trail from Pine Street to Homestead Avenue.

5. Old Home Day Planning

Thieme reminded the members that the OSC has a booth and participates in the parade. Thieme mentioned that some children want to watch the parade as well as participate in it. Line-up for the parade will be between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. at Talbot Hill Road. Ames mentioned that the oxen did not walk the entire parade route in the past but instead joined the parade from the Wilcox building site. Ames suggested that any poster used to advertise for the event ask for children to be accompanied by an adult(s). Thieme asked for volunteers – DiLuzio said she would tend the booth. McElvey and Bernard cannot be there. Thieme suggested that as many folks walk in the parade as possible. Banner "The Next Generation" will be used for the parade. There are some flags from last year to give out to children. Will organize shifts for the parade and booth at next meeting, July 9, 2014.

6. Jesse, James, Bright "Get to Know You" Day in September

Ames informed the members that she spoke to the future Principal for Mt. Caesar Elementary School about having the event and reported that she was very open to the idea. Morrison

suggested getting in touch with Darlene Ayotte who is involved with the After School program. 499-1302 is her number. She is always looking at activities for kids from 3 – 5 p.m.

7. October Talk at Town Hall

DiLuzio said there isn't much to do right now. No report at this time.

8. West Swanzey Park Update

Colby spoke about the plans for the park. Department of Public Works is going to break up the pavement and do some grass seeding. Old granite walks will be used for a tier of stones for seating in the southwest corner of the park. Bernard reported that the tiers are designed to provide seating for concerts or other spectator events that might be held at the park in the future. Colby said the pavilion won't be considered in the short term because of cost. He also reported that there will be no permanent bathrooms, but might be a port-a-potty. There was some talk about a railing on Main Street. Picnic tables may be included, and granite benches. Colby said we should see activity at the park during the next month. A canoe launch is yet to be decided because the current is strong. There might be a take-out there eventually.

9. Making Fairy gardens

Ames mentioned that there is a nursery in the area that provides furnishings for small fairy gardens that might be interesting to children.

10. Other OSC Matters

- a. Thieme reported that Steve Stepenuck from the Conservation Commission is doing a presentation at Town Hall on Thursday June 26, 2014 during the Planning Board meeting. The presentation will cover the condition of the Ashuelot River, including the e-coli count. He has tried to identify the point source that might be contributing to some of the problem areas.
- b. *"Swanzey Uncovered"* newsletter will be available soon and DiLuzio suggested that some copies be made available at the OSC Old Home Day booth.
- c. Thieme reported that the owners of property on Carlton Road east of the covered bridge are researching possible uses for their land.
- d. Thieme noted that the OSC still has funds for projects to be used appropriately, including Jean Blood's memorial funds.
- e. Morrison mentioned the possibility of Monadnock students being non-voting members of the Conservation Commission and/or the Open Space Committee to stir interest among young people for conservation issues.
- f. Morrison also mentioned that the Conservation Commission wants to open up the view on top of Mt. Cresson.
- g. Morrison asked the OSC to consider pooling resources to do natural resources inventory. Identify aquifers from Matthews Road to the south on Route 32. The goal is to preserve the land and aquifer and wildlife corridor. Thieme said that this has already been done. Ames said that she thought the State of New Hampshire has the aquifer information already in place. Morrison suggested hiring a wetlands scientist to look at the Talbot Hill Road development area. Thieme said that the OSC is involved in neither development issues and

nor in political activity. Thieme pointed out that the Conservation Commission is a regulatory body and the OSC is not. We have different roles in the community.

- h. DiLuzio mentioned there is some interest on the part of the owner(s) for a possible easement on some Matthews Road property.

ADJOURNMENT

DiLuzio **moved** to adjourn; McElvey seconded the motion and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**
Adjournment occurred at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard", written in a cursive style.

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary