

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Open Space Committee (OSC)
Meeting Minutes – December 10, 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 5:00 p.m. Present were 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 5:12 p.m.

Absent: Alternate Deb Crowder

Minutes:

Sielke **moved** to accept the minutes from November 12, 2014 and McElvey seconded the motion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

AGENDA ITEMS – Thieme thanked the Committee for their hard work during 2014.

1. **Button Update** – Ames updated the Committee saying that she did communicate with the graphic designer but hasn’t gotten further than that at the moment.
2. **Discussion re: Donation to Rail Trail project**– Thieme discussed a possible donation for the Rail Trail project, as was done last year. She noted that there is \$2,200 remaining in the OSC 2014 budget. There was a discussion about the legality of donating the funds and when it would have to be spent. Colby said that it would have to be spent by the end of December 2014. Colby suggested that Rail Trail Project Manager Bruce Bohannon be communicated with to learn how the money might be used on the Trail. Thieme estimated the Committee gave approximately \$3,500 last year. Ames mentioned that the new buttons would need to be financed and she said she would speak to the graphic designer to find out more about cost for the buttons. DiLuzio suggested that we obtain the cost for the buttons first and then consider a donation for the Rail Trail. The Committee agreed to wait until Ames has numbers to work with.
3. **Wish Lists for discussion in January** – The following were considered and discussed: Celebration Event at Belding Field; Creating Main Street banners for West Swanzey; improve the home page for the Town to promote the preservation of land, and open space(example of Londonderry OSC working close with EDAC); to adopt a class (perhaps 3rd grade) and do one outing/hike with the kids; get high school folks involved in OSC projects; setting up a bird-feeding station (do seasonal projects with kids); increase awareness of conserved pieces of land (postcards did that for 2014); securing new properties; joint effort with other committees in Town to provide more common goals; produce a DVD for promotional purposes; more talks held at Town Hall like the Cellar Hole Talk; do more with the River and the yet-to-be established West Swanzey park and the use of it for canoeing; rail trail promotion; trees and forestry talks by State folks; stone wall talk; walk for animals; bike ride on Rail Trail event; new West Swanzey park opening celebration; focus on the Ashuelot River; Swanzey Old Home Days; hike at Yale

Forest; thank you celebration for landowners; education for publications – putting in an article into the newspapers - little known facts – once a month contributed by members; create a sign with mission statement to inform residents what we do and who we are – sandwich board or poster or banner; event for the opening of the West Swanzey Park – including live music; spring snowshoe hike; birding outing; star-gazing at Belding Field; 3rd grade event with the oxen like what was done at Northfield-Mt Hermon school; “Reading the Landscape” Hike with Tom Wessels; develop theme with people coming to the oxen at Belding Field rather than travelling with oxen; lecture series, one in spring and one in fall; utilize social media more; history of Ashuelot River lecture; Stone wall lecture; restoration of Mt. Caesar view; Committee education in terminology, procedures, etc. for conserving the land – maybe have Ryan Owens talk to us to give us more confidence to talk about the subject; coming up with a tagline. These will be listed in a spreadsheet and all members will have an opportunity to rate them in order of preference for deliberation at the Retreat in January which Bernard will provide.

4. **Deliberative Session – defending the \$50,000** – In defense of funding \$50,000 into the Land Acquisition Account for 2015, Ames suggested the Committee members each represent different aspects of Town to convey the importance of land acquisition from each perspective. Aspects of the Town to be represented would be children, the elderly and the heritage of the Town, newcomers, people who don’t have a lot of money or land, economic development, etc. Farnsworth also suggested that the Committee speak about what has been accomplished and goals for the future.
5. **January 17, 2015 from 9:00 – 12:00 for Workshop Retreat to determine activities for 2015.** The regular meeting will be held on January 14, 2015 to prepare for the Deliberative Session.

ADJOURNMENT

DiLuzio **moved** to adjourn; Sielke seconded the motion and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**
Adjournment occurred at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary