

Jackson Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2016

Present were members: Margaret Graciano, Mike Dufilho, Pam Smillie, Tom Seidel, Dave Matesky, and Mark Ross-Parent. George Howard also attended. Hank Benesh filmed the meeting. Thank you, Hank!

Brian Byrne was absent.

A motion was made to approve the August minutes as amended. Mike did not remember suggesting that we have residents only parking like Ossippe Lake has. We omitted that part from the minutes.

George commented that he thought eliminating parking at the falls would be very snobby. Pam agreed that the town would never like that because hotels and inns depend on sending their guests there.

Conservation Easements

Tom opened the discussion about easement monitoring. We do not have paper forms for SPNHF properties this year but we can go online to complete the form. For town properties, there is no form to complete but we should follow the same set of questions/guidelines. Pam volunteered to write a form letter informing property owners of our intent. We agreed to complete our monitoring by November's meeting.

Prospect Farm

Tom said that we need to make sure Rick Davis mows Prospect Farm this year. Larry always communicated with him in the past but Tom is going to check in with him. The mowing is now funded by the town's highway department but we will pay for any gaps.

Mark asked exactly what parts we mow?

Margaret wondered which part we mow and what JSTF does? Because the Orchard trail will become overgrown in time if that is not also cut.

Mark is going to talk to Rick Davis and Tom will talk to Julie.

Next, the commission discussed our progress on interpretive signs. Mike, George and Margaret agreed to meet separately to continue work on the write-ups. We have a fairly good outline, just need to fill in the blanks.

Margaret shared that she and Mark walked up to Prospect Farm today and wondered if we want to continue cutting near the large boulder off the Orchard Trail in order to maintain a view? Not everyone was aware of what part she referred to so additional discussion is needed.

George asked why the mowing fee comes from the highway budget and not the commission's budget? Tom replied that Larry made a push to have it included in the fees for the rest of the town's mowing in order to reserve our funds for other projects.

Jackson Falls

Tom addressed the issue of public bathrooms in town and increasing frustration from business owners at the public's use of their bathrooms. The selectmen have asked if we would be willing to place a porta potty at Jackson Falls during the busy season. Tom asked the group our opinion of installing a porta potty.

Pam expressed her concern that porta potties invite more trash. She explained that years ago there was a dumpster at the falls and people abused it. In general, she feels that trash cans and porta potties can

create more of a mess.

Mark wondered if we could have them for the busiest times of the year. Perhaps Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Mike stated that there is nothing more gross than a gross porta potty.

We all agreed that we are in favor of a porta potty for a limited period of time as long as it is well managed. Tom suggested placing it at the corner near Valley Cross Rd.

George wondered if anything in the wild and scenic management plan applies to porta potties?

Dave asked Pam if the town is liable should someone slip and fall on one of the town properties. Some discussion ensued and Pam said that she would look into it.

Mark asked if we had officially determined the wording of our “no parking” signs for Valley Cross Rd. Tom drew a map and we flushed out the number of signs needed and the most effective wording.

Margaret returned to the porta potty discussion. She wondered if we might want to locate it closer to the handicap parking spaces so that it is handicap accessible. Everyone thought that was a positive idea. Margaret also wondered if we wanted to install trash cans. Mike, Mark, Tom and Pam emphatically said no! They believe that the presence of trash cans will encourage people to leave MORE trash.

Tom said that we had planned to install a fence this summer. We haven't yet. But we have until November. He asked if anyone would be willing to go measure the length with him after the meeting tonight? Mark said he would go. Tom then said we should check and see if we can use any money from the Wildcat Trust Fund to pay for the fence.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:47p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Graciano