

Town of Londonderry, Musquash Target Shooting Task Force Meeting Minutes

The shooting Task Force Meeting was held in Moose hill Council Chambers, Town Hall, 268B Mammoth Rd, Londonderry, NH.

Present: Chairman Bill Hart, Al Sypek, Dana Coons, Bonnie McSititt, Bob Saur, Dan Watson, Lt. Gordon Joudrey, Sgt Jason Breen, Randy McIntyre, Mike Considine.

Call to Order

Chairman Captain William Hart called the meeting to order.

Discussion

- B. Hart discussed housekeeping issues. Hart stated that the Police cost guesstimate prepared by Deputy Chief Dussault is in the packet for tonight's meeting. It is based on current law. Hart stated that he also included the brainstorm start, an overview. B. Hart stated that he also included hard copies as well as digitally, the maps that were prepared by John Vogl.
- B. Hart asked the board if it would be their preference to have a public meeting to gather the public's input. Al Sypek stated that it should be opened up to the public. D. Coons agreed but stated that he is not sure March 11th would be a good day because there will be a Planning Board meeting that night too. The board discussed a workshop. B. Saur stated that he doesn't think it is the Charter to take public input. Saur stated the committee is charged with making a decision but with that said, if there can be a draft proposal, he thinks it would be good to have a public meeting.
- B. Hart stated that the charge does not limit the committee in any way. It simply states that the committee is tasked with studying the issue of target shooting in the aforementioned areas and to figure out what changes, if any, should be made to current Ordinances.
- B. Saur stated that he would suggest that the committee consider the 18th for an input date. The committee should come up with a progress report on where things stand and let the public comment on that. B. Hart agreed that there should be something on the table for the public to discuss.
- B. Hart stated that one of the issues that came up was the use of the Police range. B. Hart stated that it was initially considered in the concept of what resources would need to be available, what hours, etc. B. Hart stated that Sgt. Breen stated that it is on private property and it is a loan to the Police Department. B. Hart stated that the owner stated that he would be opposed to

traffic going in and out across his area. It is no longer an option. Sgt. Breen stated that he presented the idea of “off hours” but it was not an option. There is a lot of liability.

- B. Hart stated that a total ban on target shooting is what Attorney Ramsdell was talking about the other day. B. Hart asked the committee if that is still an open option. The board stated yes.
- B. McSpittitt stated that there were two Ordinances that were proposed. McSpittitt stated that the committee should focus on one. A. Sypek stated that he proposed the short one that he did because there doesn't need to be an Ordinance. All the board needs to do is make a recommendation to the Council.
- B. Hart asked the board if setting a certain season for target shooting is still an open option. B. Saur stated that it could be an option but it could generate additional limitations.
- The board discussed the pros and cons of shooting at trees. M. Considine stated that shooting across trails, into trails and into neighborhoods shouldn't be happening and that is the issue. M. Considine stated that if people shoot at an open range, that range has to have a safety zone that is the maximum distance that the bullet can be fired.
- R. McIntyre stated that the total ban makes no sense.
- B. Hart went into describing how there are challenges using current law with prosecution and enforcement. B. Hart stated that he can bring Kevin Coyle back to talk with the board about those issues.
- The board discussed the dos and don'ts of notifying the police when target shooting happens where it is not supposed to.
- M. Considine stated that he is not opposed to target shooting but there needs to be a safe place for people to go and target shoot. M. Considine stated that in order to put together a policy and procedures, you need enforcement.
- B. Saur stated that he is in favor of setting aside an area and if some group would like to maintain it and be responsible for range safety, etc. they can use a piece of Town land to do that. Saur stated that there are several pieces of land to do that. Saur stated that that is not the Charter. The Charter states that the conservation lands here in Town and dealing with the issue as it is today, that is the boards responsibility. B. Saur stated that a decision needs to be made on that. B. Hart stated that the Charter is broad, so the board can discuss a range, a ban or nothing. It's up to the board to decide.

- The board discussed the possibility of a range in Town. B. Saur asked the board if they agree that they should come to some agreement or statement that says the Town should consider, or the board recommends, that the Town establish an appropriate range in Town and could consider the following, or other locations. B. Hart stated that as a committee a motion should be made. B. Hart stated that the charge could be as broad or as narrow as the board wishes. D. Watson put together a list of places that are a good start. B. Hart stated that it could be presented to the Town Managers office and the Town Council.
- B. McSpittitt addressed the noise level of guns going off outside houses. B. McSpittitt stated that target shooters and hunters have protective gear they put on to protect their ears but all the other people who live in the surrounding areas can hear the shots. Sgt. Breen stated that can be the first recommendation, that if it's taken to a vote, there should be a target shooting Ordinance. B. Saur stated that most of the Town Council Resolutions are "whereas"...a recommendation. B. Saur asked the board if they would like to make that a "whereas" statement. The board stated that they are not at that point yet.
- A. Sypek motioned to recommend that target shooting shall not be allowed on any municipally owned or municipally controlled property, unless at a facility approved by the Town Council. Motioned seconded by M. Considine. B. Hart opened up the motion for discussion. B. Saur stated that that limits us to Town conservation land so the motion should be amended to say Town owned conservation land, not municipal land, because that's not in the Charter. B. Hart read the passage from the Charter. A. Sypek amended his motion and seconded by M. Considine. A. Sypek read in his motion, ***to recommend to the Town Council that target shooting shall not be allowed in the Musquash or other Town conservation land, unless at a facility approved by the Town Council.*** D. Watson stated that he can see responsible firearms users being left in the lurch. D. Watson stated that it should be worded to say something like "until such time as...we have a range" so that those responsible people are not effect. D. Watson stated that the point about the Town owned conservation property is key. There is a lot of shooting that happens in other areas as well. D. Watson stated that there is potential that this problem could be pushed elsewhere. It should be considered the other impacts of banning target shooting in the Musquash. B. Saur stated that he would support this motion but it should not be the only recommendation. There should be other recommendations made. B. Hart stated that the charge is broad enough so the ideas can go beyond this. The discussion can go on from here. A. Sypek stated that he is not going to withdraw the motion because the board needs a starting point. B. Hart stated that this motion either needs to be voted on today or the discussion will be continued to the next meeting.
- B. Saur stated that there will be more motions. The board can move forward from this motion. B. Hart stated that there needs to be a vote on the recommendation regarding target shooting. B. Hart stated that there are two more meeting schedule if the vote fails. If the motion succeeds, it will be discussed on how to fill in the gaps. B. Hart asked the board if they would like

to wait until the next meeting. B. Hart stated that a person who wants to have a vote now can make a motion to move the question, providing it's seconded, it must be acted upon. If that doesn't happen, B. Hart stated that in two weeks they can continue the discussion. M. Considine motioned to move the question, second by R. McIntyre. A. Sypek read in his motion, ***to recommend to the Town Council that target shooting shall not be allowed in the Musquash or other Town conservation land, unless at a facility approved by the Town Council. Board votes 6-3-0.***

- Motion to adjourn made by D. Coons and second by B. Saur. **Board votes 9-0-0.**