

Minutes Washington Forestry Committee: Meeting of July 15, 2014

1.0 Assembly:

- 1.1 Meeting was called to order at Washington Town Hall at 4:05 P.M.
- 1.2 Members present: Tom Burt, Steve Hanssen, Al Krygeris, Pete Martin, Tom Taylor (Chairman)
- 1.3 Guests: Washington Conservation Commission: Jed Schwartz, John Brighton;
Lempster: Ilene Landry, Sue Lichty (a SPNHF Land Steward).

2.0 Minutes:

- 2.1 Steve Hanssen presented the minutes of the previous meeting held on February 18, 2014. Al K. moved to accept the minutes. Tom Burt seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

3.0 Administrative Initiatives:

- 3.1 Tom T. pointed out that the Forestry Committee meeting minutes, which are routinely circulated among the members of the Forestry Committee and other Town administrative bodies, should be made available to the general public via use of the Town's publically accessible web site. All present agreed that the public at large needs to know about: (a) The Town's forest holdings, and (b) The ongoing managerial asset review process of all forest holdings by the Forestry Committee aimed at identifying which "Best Practices" methods would be most suitable to use to support the health of the Town's natural woodland areas.

Steve Hanssen indicated that he would gather together the minutes which cover the activities of the Forestry Committee over the last two years and, with the generous help of volunteers Jed and Nan Schwartz, scan these documents, then post them on the Town's website. Thanks in advance to the Schwartzs for their assistance.

4.0 Old Business: Regional Trail Opportunities:

- 4.1 The following discussion involved all meeting attendees, who all expressed keen interest in recreational use of several contiguous properties in the Washington area. The discussion centered on "hiking trail" possibilities with the aggregation of the following forest tracts:

- (a) Lempster's Long Pond Town Forest;
- (b) Washington's Farnsworth Tract Town Forest;
- (c) SPNHF's Farnsworth Hill Forest; and
- (d) SPNHF's Ashuelot River Headwaters Forest.

Tom Taylor stated that it was time to hold a general conversation among interested parties, with the objective being to arrive at a common vision (strategic concept), to possibly connect one or more points in the Ashuelot area to the crest of Sliver Mountain in Lempster.

- 4.2 Steve Hanssen pointed out that both (a) the course of the river and (b) a short gap between parcels of conserved land pose "through trail" challenges.

Sue Landy and Ilene Lichty noted that the two landowners in the Long Pond/Sand Pond gap (Timpano and Doyle) have historically been supportive of hiker passage through their land. Ilene and Sue said they would contact these landowners to explore the possibility formally obtaining their permission to establish a durable hiking trail over their properties.

In focusing on crossing the Ashuelot River, several possibilities present themselves:

- McKennins Bridge
- 2nd New Hampshire turnpike (Lempster Mountain Road)
- Constructing a new hiker-only bridge, which would be a minimal structure with low maintenance requirements, it's sole purpose being to provide safe passage for hikers.