

Meeting of the Hogback Preservation Commission
5 p.m. Monday, May 11, 2015
Marlboro, Vermont Town Office

Minutes

Call to Order – 5:10pm

Attendees: Mike Purcell, Lauren Macarthur, Ed Metcalfe, Christine Colella, Phil Howe, David Elliott, Diana Todd- HMCA

Absent: Hal Himmelstein

Review of Agenda/Minutes

March 9, 2015 Minutes – approved,

January 12, 2015 minutes amended and approved.

Reports

Chair's Report- Mike Purcell

1. “**Passing of gavel**”- Met with Hal and HPC paperwork was passed to Mike Purcell.
2. Recommendations & approval for/of HPC commissioners to serve 2015-2018 terms. **Election of Officers** – Phil Howe (HPC is recommending Phil for the 3 year term) Just waiting on Selectboard letter making his position official- on the Marlboro Website David is listed and a vacancy. Mike will recommend Phil officially to fill the vacancy. David Elliott was voted in as Hogback Preservation Commission members at the last Selectboard Meeting to serve 2015-2018.

HMCA Report – Diana Todd

1. Research Project to Monitor Migrating Songbirds/antenna construction – went well & made the front page of the Reformer!
2. Connor Hunt, Lyndon State, tick study proposal- HMCA endorses
3. Saltman Overlook – building bench. Vernal Pool interpretive sign is ready to go at the Saltman Overlook and will be put up when the bench is constructed and delivered to the site.
4. Vermont Land Trust – Annual gathering on Wed, June 3. Will host visitors from MA, NH, & Vermont. Diana and Staley will speak at the meeting about the Early Successional Habitat project & other activities on the mountain.
5. Still working towards Non-profit Status – EIN # for HMCA received and moving forward.
6. HMCA 1st Annual Meeting Aug 9 – Tom Wessels, Antioch Professor, Naturalist, and author – walk & talk at Memorial Hall. Will accept donations and HMCA will be working on details this summer. HMCA states they will request funding for future years through the Selectboard-approved budget and HPC members suggested working out donations so there are funds available should budgets get

- tight from the Selectboard as we never know from year to year what costs and projects may arise for the sustainability of the area.
7. HMCA Trail Committee- working on Douglas Trail bridge.
 8. The HMC Facebook site is being liked and visited more and more. The site is attracting requests for studies and visitors.

SVNHM Report – Ed Metcalfe

1. Ed is happy to report that SVNHM is setting records for admissions and programs!
2. Mike has programs going on weekly and is booked all over the state for the next couple of months.

Old Business

Biodiversity study – Mike brought up and discussed the need to conduct more research to see who is available to conduct a Biodiversity Study. HPC has discussed this over the past couple of years and it is time to see what the costs are to have such a study conducted. HPC agrees that it is important to see what biotic/abiotic factors and different habitats are located on Hogback. Mike Purcell will be contacting Bill Gunther to get names of people for conducting a study. HPC is hoping to have names and information of persons/organizations that can conduct a biodiversity study for the next meeting. We have no idea of the cost of this study. Diana Todd requested to go on record stating that HMCA strongly feels that the study should be borne by town funds and not from Hogback funds (the “Endowment Funds”).

New Business

Tick Study proposed by Connor Hunt- study approved unanimously by the HPC. Mike will contact HMCA about approval. This is a long term study on the mountain involving the capture/release of mice and testing them for Lyme disease. This study will also quantify the effect that altitude has on tick numbers and if the numbers change as the overall global temperature changes. HPC will bring this recommendation to the Selectboard for approval.

Snowmobile use on site 2014-15 – preliminary discussion – There was a moderate amount of unauthorized snowmobile use on the ski area side. Some snowmobilers did not stay on the designated trail. Conversations with snowmobilers and behavior has indicated a strong desire to reach the summit and/or tower but there is no “official access” for snowmobilers. HPC members discussed the need to invite a representative from VAST/Stump Jumpers to discuss this and other issues with snowmobiling on Hogback property. Mike will be in touch with the Stump Jumpers to see if we can have a representative come to the next meeting. By having a meeting this summer, HPC and Stump Jumpers can better define criteria for snowmobile use on Hogback to limit damage and leave no trace to sensitive areas.

Woody Debris from Past Ice Storms – David brought up the whether or not HPC has looked into the fire risks associated with the woody debris now on the forest floor from ice storm of 2008. With the dry spring, this fuel could create a fire hazard. As Fire Chief of Marlboro, this is a concern. Organic debris is an important component to the health of forests. It is, however, recommended that organic debris be removed that is 100 feet of homes or structures (USFS). HPC members did not discuss any plans to remove debris.

Audubon Donation - Hal was absent to discuss this matter and will provide details at next meeting.

Marlboro Elementary School Hogback Day: 5/20/15 grades 1-8. Mike shared with the HPC the dates and some of the activities that will go on throughout the day at Hogback.

Adjournment – 6:35pm

Next Meeting – July 13th, 5pm

Respectfully submitted,

Christine R. Colella, MS

HPC

5/15/15