

Hogback Mountain Conservation Association

Minutes of the HMCA Board meeting April 5, 2017, at the Marlboro Town Office

Present: Board members: Diana Todd, Carol Berner, Nancy Anderson, Bob Anderson, Staley McDermet, Amanda Whiting and members Jaime Tanner, Mike Purcell, Malcolm Moore.

Absent: Michael Clough

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Diana Todd.

The Board agreed to share the task of taking meeting minutes on a rotating basis in last name order.

The Board accepted into the record the minutes of the January 10, 2017 meeting approved by an earlier email vote.

Diana announced that Board member Patti Smith resigned due to her present workload. Patti will continue to be involved in HMCA activities, particularly in the biodiversity study. The Board unanimously voted to acknowledge her many contributions to HMCA and Hogback in a letter of thanks.

Nancy presented the treasurer's report, noting there was approximately \$2,500 dollars on hand. The tax return for 2016 has been filed. Staley agreed to be the assistant treasurer. The report was unanimously accepted by the Board.

Diana announced that the proposed HCMA bylaw changes have been approved. These changes include: the ability to enlarge the Board; term limits of two consecutive 3 year terms; dispensed with the need for the "full membership" to change the number of Board members.

The issue of votes by email was discussed by the Board. The ease of email voting was broadly acknowledged but several members underscored complexities in voting by email because there are no broadly established standards for doing so. Conversely, the difficulty of a small Board gathering its members from a sometimes significant distance was also noted.

The Board agreed to physically meet four times a year on a trial basis for one year. The meetings will take place on the fourth Monday of January, April, July and Oct. Time and location will most often be at the Town Office at 7:00 PM, but is not restricted to that time and place. Board members are free to continue to discuss HMCA business matters by email as well as to get a sense of Board sentiment on issues. Formal votes, however, will be limited to actual Board meetings, at least during this trial period. Meetings will be open both to members and to the public.

Continuing the discussion of bylaws, the issue of “temporary Voting Member (TVM)” was broached. Board members heartily endorsed the inclusionary aspect of TVM, but the complexity of maintaining communication and distinction between two classes of voting members appeared daunting. Establishing an “Advisory Panel” was suggested and adopted.

Carol announced that May 31 will be “MES Day”. Several Board members volunteered to assist. Carol asked for suggestions of any other community members that might be interested in doing a project. Details on the commemorative map suggested by Carol will be sent to the Board by separate cover.

The HPC report by Mike P. centered on disposition of the T-Bar equipment still at the mountain. The Board suggested formally acquiring the T-bar equipment from the town to use for future fundraising activities complete with a clear paper trail for such acquisition. If the town agrees, an HMCA work party (time & date TBD) would move the T-bar T’s to the Anderson’s barn and the spring-loaded roll-up canisters to the Benedict House. Mike Purcell will pursue the matter with the Select Board on a quid-pro-quo basis. Any realized monies would go to HMCA.

Mike has marked a trail connection between the Hogback Mountain trail system and Molly Stark State Park, but no further work has been done.

The issue of permits and permitted activities at Hogback was introduced. Nancy said she earlier discussed permitting with the Town Clerk and it turned out that the Town also had a permit system for the use of any town property by individuals including Hogback. Further discussion also revealed that it wasn’t clear which Hogback activity might require a permit and which wouldn’t. Discussion of this matter with HPC and the Town will continue.

Mike Clough notified the Board by email of his expected absence for the meeting and noted that he had nothing of significance to report regarding the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum.

Discussion turned to possible upcoming activities. Diana passed along an invitation from the Windham Regional Woodland Association (WRWA) to join their annual meeting in September at Molly Stark Park. The Board agreed to accept the invitation and share a joint event with WRWA. HMCA will need to learn more about what may or may not be needed from HMCA in the way of program contributions.

The Board plans to continue with the thinning at the Bishop site. Date and time TBD. Bob volunteered his chipper to help with disposition of the brush. Earlier discussion of the T-Bar removal as a workday remains dependent on the Town’s agreement to transfer ownership of the T-Bar equipment to HMCA.

Diana reported that there had been no activity by the Biodiversity Inventory joint committee.

Diana noted that the second phase of the Early Successional Habitat (ESH) activity on the Great White Way had been completed and reminded everyone that the Practice Slope is next.

A discussion of upcoming programs ended the meeting with several Board members considering ways to help; Amanda volunteered the possibility of a walk on the north side. Nancy will contact people about possible birding activity as well as a plants and flowers walk.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, April 12, 2017.

Bob Anderson