

Hogback Mountain Conservation Association

Minutes of the HMCA Board meeting July 24, 2017, at the Marlboro Town Office

Present: Board members: Diana Todd, Carol Berner, Nancy Anderson, Bob Anderson, Staley McDermet, Amanda Whiting and members Mike Purcell and Jack Hidsell.

Absent: Michael Clough

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

The Board accepted into the record the minutes of the April 4, 2017 meeting.

Nancy distributed and reviewed the Treasurer's report. (See attached).

- Select Board approved the 2017 Consolidated Hogback Conservation Area Budget with the exception of the \$10,000 line item for the Biodiversity Study, which they deferred until further information is obtained.

Sister Organizations

Marlboro Elementary School Annual Day at Hogback Mountain

- Carol thanked the group for their support: 1) facilitating and helping with activities; 2) providing stipends; and 3) creating a commemorative poster for Francie Marbury, retiring MES Principal. For 3) Special thanks to Bob and Diana.
- Highlights this year included four new activities/facilitators drawn from the community, including Diana and Lee Todd and two Marlboro College Professors.
- Carol showed samples of student work from the event and emphasized the significance of community support (from MES staff and local volunteers) and diversity of offerings.

HPC

- Mike reported on status of proposed transfer of T-bars to HMCA. Town owns them. Selectmen are generally in favor of transfer, but are figuring out how to transfer town property to private organization. Diana wrote article for Mixer. The Select Board invited public to comment at July 27 meeting.
- Mike reported that there has been discussion about special permits. Important to revisit mechanism to review requests for compliance/recommendation. HPC will make a proposal to Select Board for how this will work.

SVNHM

- Diana reported that Beer Naked Brewery had their opening about 3 weeks ago.

Programs

T-Bars

- Bob offered to store T-bars and retractors in his barn. Bob will check condition of ground for transporting T-bars. Depending heavily on Bob for vehicle, truck, barn and timing.
- Moving T-bars: public event need minimum 8 helpers to load, unload, store on 2nd floor.
- Date for moving T-bars. Sunday, October 1. Morning.

ESH Work Days:

- 9/10, 10/9, 10/28, 11/12

Review of this year's Spring and Summer Programs

- Wildflower tour: Alison willing to repeat annually (alternate spring and fall).
- Bird Walk: think about facilitators. Amanda suggests collaboration with Audubon.
- Diana says surprise was “just a hike” that drew 22 people. Consider offering simple hikes, don't have to have special programming.
- Trail work day: not big turnout (8-9 people, 3 groups).
- Scheduling note: Mix up Saturday, Sunday, morning and afternoon.
- Cougar Talk: Amanda reported (see separate write-up). 112 people (biggest yet). \$276 donation (1 person donated \$100). 94 people signed in: 38 provided e-mail address. How did you find out? 1. Newspaper. 2. Poster. Especially in Wilmington. 4 new volunteers.
 - Try to improve acoustics for Wilmington venue
- Think about having Roger Haydock do something with Hogback: maybe a planning event/hike to see if he's interested?

Sept 9, WRWA Annual Meeting at Molly Stark

- Diana reported that focus is ESH at Molly Stark. Diana will make a presentation about our ESH program at 1:00. Recommends that we communicate to our list the invitation and our endorsement.
- Jack inquired about a schedule: Diana says to include this to our fans.

Sept 16, Marlboro Fair

- Diana suggested and group agreed to skip a year and organize new display for 2018: possibly focus on Bishop Cellar Hole.

Committee reports

Trail Committee – Mike P., Bob, Staley, Malcolm, Diana

- Mike reported 2 trail signs stolen over winter (first time).
- Towards Ledges (Old Hogback) people are cutting corner. Recommend arrow or arrow and sign to indicate preferred route.
- Talk about whether to have map holder at Grant Road: definitely. Mike will make.
- Bob & Nancy keep map holders filled: copied 100 maps last fall, all gone. Made another 250 this spring (one third left). Haven't submitted expenses, but agree it's good to start

tracking in order to understand and provide for costs in the future. Staley adds that it's a good way to track number of maps.

- Bob took a walk around White's Loop tonight: good shape, enough use that 18" is dead to growth. Trail visible at any point – be aggressive again next year.
- Mike had tough time showing VLT person the proposed trail from Molly Stark. (marked in green during stick season). MTB festival: people interested in helping to create something from state park.
- Mike mentioned showing VLT person trees to identify to open view from summit of Hogback. She says not necessary to seek approval if only 2-3 trees.
- ESH: Diana reported on photo documentation of re-growth. GWW no path makes it hard to find stakes. Would like trail to each of the 100 foot stakes. Staley suggested clearing in from edges of slope.

Biodiversity Inventory Working Group – Diana (reporting). Patti, Amanda, Mike P.

- Jennifer Garrett is person from VLT responsible to confirm compliance with easement. Site visit not required every year (aerial photos on alternating years).
- Diana reported on asking Jennifer to review RFP for Biodiversity Inventory. Jennifer was very encouraging and said she'd investigate candidates. Lots of data to give contractor already in hand. Diana showed group sample with maps of natural communities.
- Jennifer's perspective about conservation easement: makes clear that public use by human beings should have equal weight with protection of wildlife. Must always allow public use.
- Conservation easement and VLT philosophy: harvesting timber not required. This should be updated in Management Plan once biodiversity inventory is complete.

ESH Committee – Diana

- Will start work on Practice Slope this fall.
- Schedule 4 work days. 9/10, 10/9, 10/28, 11/12

New business

Bishop farm: Bob Anderson offered to take the lead on closer management.

- Ideas include: general maintenance; continuing to clear site (like last 2 years); entrance confusing for stranger (cable across) – create pedestrian entrance off to side; informational synopsis on exterior display. Stakes at corners to indicate foundation lines.
- Bob will oversee steps and come to Board with ideas for any significant changes.
- Diana likes the idea that one person embraces an aspect of the Mountain. Think about other aspects people could embrace: e.g. Ski History (doesn't have to be a Board member).

Interpretive signs – Diana asks is anyone willing to take the lead on this?

- E.g. Ski History, Geology, etc.
- Amanda talked about common system of interpretation where each sign post has a number corresponding to a brochure explaining elements – self-guided tour.

Plan joint event with Marlboro Historical Society

Citizen Science

- Nancy encourages us to pool and share information about how Citizen Science is used by other organizations. Possible links to Biodiversity Inventory. Wildflowers, Birds.

Nancy read aloud Francie Marbury's thank you note for commemorative poster.

Nancy brought up initiative of Green River Watershed Alliance. Be aware and share this information.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Respectfully submitted,

July 25, 2017

Carol Berner