

MINUTES
Trails Committee
February 1, 2016

Attending: Norma & Ron Wiesen, Matt Jerome, Lenore & Wayne Renaud, Norma Spaulding, Gail Johnson, Helen Beattie, Judy Bellairs, Sue Trecartin, Jessica Manchester, Dave Mitchell

Guest: Michael Bielawski, *The Gazette*

1. **Financials.** We haven't received anything from Brittany because she's been working alone and is overloaded. Based on Lenore's figures, we have approximately \$4,500-4,600. Our capital fund is \$5,339.
2. **Trail Conditions.** The trails are very icy. Ben was laying lines down today.
3. **Minutes.** Dave Mitchell moved the Minutes of January 4th; Helen seconded. Approved.
4. **Volunteer Time.** It would be in our best interest if people do any work on the trails, that they record it, even meeting time. According to independent.sector.org, a leadership network that has determined the value of volunteer time around the country, here in Vermont an hour of volunteer time is worth \$21.91. Grant seeking and other kinds of appeals for financial help sometimes ask us to give some kind of information about donor time. Other times, we can provide it. We will take a few minutes at each meeting to record our hours from the past month.
5. **Event Sign-in.** We will make an effort to have people sign in to keep track of numbers. Jessica will create a form and email it to Norma W.
6. **Full Moon Snow Shoe.** The January event was very well attended; including the two babies, we had around 30 participants, on foot, on snowshoe, and even on skis. It was a very good time. Norma Spaulding and Sue Trecartin will lead another snowshoe on Sat., Feb. 20, 6:00 PM.
7. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** On January 14th, there was a second meeting. We are scheduled to meet again the 16th of February. There was a commitment to a number of common agreements about our process that reflected collaboration. One was to do a forest plan as part of the Forestry curriculum and to have the expertise of a forester to help in that process of planned development to look at the multi-use of the property. We don't know what it will look like, but we are living together in that space, and we will work it out. Ben has literally tapped out the woods. In terms of ongoing expansion, we did not get a sense that there is any more. The notion was voiced that anything that has not yet occurred on GMTCC's or our part needs to come out in discussion and is not owned by the party who wants to do it until there is agreement. In looking at our agreements of shared decision-making, we've laid the foundation for that premise. A mediator is in the discussion for the next meeting. We'll have a set of agreements for ongoing negotiations and shared decision-making, then a deep discussion after a forester's assessment. It's moving in the right direction. There was a good spirit, a sense of "Where do we go?" and a willingness on the part of the Forestry teacher for us to go into the program to create a relationship in addition to monthly meetings with us. It seemed like the right pieces of communication and relationship that should set us in good stead. The contract we have didn't speak to the use of the land; Sherry didn't produce anything different. That would be an important document if one exists, worth continuing to pursue that Helen will ask about. Joanne LeBlanc is aware of the process and is supportive of being involved in whatever way is best.

Brainstorming/February Meeting Agenda. Jessica has asked that we raise the possibility at the February 16th meeting of having a sugar on snow party to attract people. Sugar on snow after the Cat in the Hat event would be wonderful, but we might need a lot of syrup. It could be a combined effort with a few events that appeal to a variety of age groups and include a sugarhouse tour with us doing the marketing

8. **Cat in the Hat.** Helen will bring back the Cat in the Hat this year. We set Saturday, March 19th, for it.
9. **REACH.** For the elementary ski program, in Week 1 there were 11 students, in Week 2 there were five, and last week they cancelled because it was too icy. This week, there will be no opportunity due to the weather. We have cabin coverage for Feb. 13—Lenore, 20—Gail, 27—Norma & Ron.

10. **Hardwick Town Recreation Coordinator, Jessica Manchester.**

The Rec Committee will use the board in the window downtown that Trails has used to update it with information for the Recreation Committee.

We discussed at some length our website will be connected to the Town's website. Doug McClure could not be here tonight. We imagine that the town would have a good looking website and that we will be one of the links. Jessica noted the concern was raised at the Rec Committee meeting that if we're not centralizing things on the town website, it sends people in different directions, scatters and loses people. Perhaps we can have a link back to the Rec Committee. Among the points raised: The Trails should have their own page. We have all three domains now-- .net, .org and .com; we will go with .org. Perhaps we can have a flat page with a link to the map. The town will have one calendar that all organizations will feed into and individuals can submit events to through Jessica. This is a conversation for a meeting with the IT person; Doug and Dave will attend.

Part of Jessica's contract is to do a needs assessment. She would like to have subcommittees reach out to the public in their areas to see what their public's needs are. We are willing to work on it; Norma W. will put out a date. Town meeting is a good opportunity for a survey. Another option is an Electric Department mailing format like we did before.

11. **Scavenger Hunt.** Gail said that four people attended, two families. They had a blast. The sheet had 32 items on it. They were intrigued by crystalline underground ice. They found a grey fox track. The snow conditions were such that it was detailed and actual. They found out about it on Front Porch Forum and in *The Gazette*.

Norma W. got an email from Diane Grenkow, Children's Librarian at Judevine. Hardwick, Craftsbury and Greensboro libraries want to do a triple-library summer scavenger hunt. Gail will talk with Nicole Miller about a joint winter one as well. Perhaps combining it with the Saturday morning open cabin time would be good.

12. **Community Forum.** It was very gratifying that the Trails came up in several forums and that the Trails are considered a real asset to the town. People want downtown signage to where the trails are, a link to the rail trail, bike trails to get to downtown. Kingdom Trails is willing to help us. The next Community Forum will be on Feb. 15th at the Knights of Columbus Hall. The conversations that were held at the first forum will be distilled down to some number of pursuable goals and committees will be formed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Trecartin

Next Meeting: March 7, 2016, 5:30 PM, at the Memorial Building