

**Revised MINUTES
Hardwick Trails Committee
July 11, 2016**

Attending: Lenore & Wayne Renaud, Judy Bellairs, Chris Ingram, Katherine Ingram, Gail Johnson, Pam Stonier

Guest: Jess Manchester, *Hardwick Town Rec Coordinator*

1. Trails conditions: WAYNE. Very good.

2. Financials: LENORE. End of Year financials will be out in a couple of days. Excavator and operator have not turned in bills. They have been told that bills have to be in before end of July.

3. Minutes of June 6 2016. Motion made by Chris Ingram, seconded by Katherine Ingram. Approved.

4. Quick reports:

A. Coin Drop - \$865.15. Local business person will be giving us an additional donation.

B. Green Trails improvement project: ERIC - (tabled until next month, Eric not here yet)

C. Walk w/ Rick Morrill/ Dawn Morgan: WAYNE, ERIC - (tabled)

D. Signs: GAIL - Perry Heller's sign is approved. Not up yet. There can be two Town signs at intersection of Mill and Main Streets. They would direct to the trails from different directions. The Town has to order them to be made up by its print shop. Cost for reflective sign is \$18.63, and \$19.44 for non-reflective. They are 12" x 18" and have to be horizontal to be reflective. One would be placed on the corner of Route 15 by the Laundromat. Christin Leahy zoning admin suggested getting another one where the Police Station is, to continue keep them going.

Get reflective. We have to tell the Town what information will be on the signs. They are too small for a logo. We should order the horizontal type signs and include a directional arrow with mileage. The Town will order. The signs can be made up in 3 to 7 days.

State signs are also available. They have black background with white printing. Suggestion is to put one near the Firehouse on Route 15. The advantage is it is an existing structure. We still have to get Firehouse OK. It costs \$75 to make, and an ongoing \$100 a year cost for each sign. There should be something more descriptive on the signs to make sure they say that no vehicles are allowed (walkers and skiers only). Gail will check to see if we have symbols. Make sure that it is clear that 4-wheelers are excluded. To avoid confusing out-of-towners, we should indicate number of miles on No. Main St. from location of signs. Maybe do another sign at 14/15 intersection near Bond Auto. Cars are slowing down at the yellow light anyway. We can do a vote if they can put the recreation symbols on there. Concern is that people see trails and they think vast or vasa. If we have signage showing no motorized vehicles they will turn around. We went thru difficulty a number of years ago and don't want to repeat that.

Judy - bulletin boards will be replaced when needed. We can do a combo poster with Rec (Recreation Poster).

Eric shared concern about ATV and motorized use. Tech Center is a jump point. We should consider having a kiosk there that limits use allowable. Run this by Norma and run by GMCC.

E. Trails Banner offer: PAM – Pam offered to donate a plastic banner approximately 2' x 5' with grommets for use at events where we have a display table. She will check with Perry Heller to see if we can get a copy of his design for the banner. There will need to be some editing to it.

5. ACTION: Dogs on the Trails: ALL – The topic of dogs on trails came up 8 times out of the 37 responses to Town Meeting questionnaires and Survey Monkey results. None were glad to see dogs on trails. Most of us are, but not everyone. Many have run into dogs not in human control. Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is dealing with this issue. They put out on Facebook that every dog owner is responsible for following town leash laws. We need to get our current leash law for Hardwick. We need to have signage that instructs people to keep dogs on a leash when others are in view, and to pick up after dog. People are not able to know what a dog is doing when you can't see it. Post as much as possible on the sign. A suggestion was made to post something on Front Porch Forum saying we are not going to be able to keep having dogs on the trails if all dog owners don't work together. We all have to share. We have zero dog parks. People do not feel safe when they see a barking dog running at them. Interaction with dog is not safe when people are on skis and bikes. You can't have dog on leash when skiing and on bike. We can't please everyone. Are we setting bar too high to meet? We are not the only trail system with dogs. We should look at what other trails are doing about this issue (e.g., Kingdom and Lamoille Valley Rail Trails). The trail system is paid for by taxpayers. We should post bullet point signs with rules at trail entrances. We will have further discussion at the August meeting. We need to have Hardwick's leash laws at that time. Lenore is going to follow up to get it.

6. Handout: Membership lists – Lenore handed out.

7. Note from Sue T – We passed around a nice thank you note from Sue. Sue has moved to Montpelier area. We gave Sue parting supplies for artwork.

8. Upcoming event: Drawing/Painting on the Trails, Susan Sawyer -- Sat. July 23 - 10:00-12:00 – she comes typically every year. Very well attended event. Nature drawing and painting and always has been a huge hit. It is free.

9. Other? Judy Bellairs raised the topic of posting Natural Heritage features of the trails – color code which plants are on the trails. Suggested that maybe Norma and Gail could help with that. Judy contacted Matt Langless, Vermont State Forestry about some white pines on our trails that are unusual – the biggest one is 30" and next 27 1/2" in diameter. It is on the Green trail. Wayne mentioned that there are several of them in a grove on the trails, with average size 25". Judy suggested that identifying and posting information about our big trees would be great promotion for our trails, and suggested asking Matt Langless to look at them and estimate their age. It was suggested that she should check with Ben Notterman who heads forestry at Hazen GMCC first because they have already put bands on trees that their program is already studying. Perhaps we can map these.

Signage - Katherine shared idea about signage that she came up with from signs she saw at Mohawk Preserve near Minewaska - Shangage preserve. She suggested we consider making up signs showing the ecological communities of the Hardwick Trails on a wooden frame and post it in the Pest House. Perhaps include a picture of the wildlife and a write-up.

Bears - Wayne - found big scat. Big berry year.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:38.

Respectfully submitted, Pam Stonier

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Next meeting: Monday, August 1 @ 5:30 @ CABIN