

**Revised MINUTES
Trails Committee
June 6, 2016**

Attending: Norma & Ron Wiesen, Lenore & Wayne Renaud, Gail Johnson, Pam Stonier, Sue Trecartin, Emmet Avery, Doug McClure, Dave Mitchell, Joe Brosseau, Nicole Miller, Eric Remick, Alex Utevsky

Guest: Foresters Rick Morrow and Dawn Morgan, Michael Bielawski, *The Gazette*

1. **Foresters, Shepard Property.** They are helping Nancy and Al navigate the Current Use Program that reduces taxes by agreeing to have a managed forest. The foresters work to help landowners stay within the rules of the program, manage timber cutting and deal with issues around water quality. They make general recommendations about roads and trails around harvesting. The state has tightened the rules. Rick and Dawn walked as much of the trails as they could in the afternoon and report: Things really do look good. The single-track looks awesome with no evidence of water moving. There are some places where ditches end in streams--small issues like that--and places where there are steeper ditches where water bars would do a lot for heavy rainfall. One of the places is where the trail goes around the Billings property; they recommend two additional water bars there. The foresters are not singling us out. When they start working a new property, these things apply whether for timber harvest or recreation. Since we have ski trails, we have to be more subtle, but they require more maintenance. The one thing, not pressing, is where there are streams going downstream, where we have done the uphill ditching that ends right in the streams. We may have to turn them out and go under the road. We could get a county forester in to find out what to do with them. Nothing is urgent, these are small and more long-term things.

Current use requires active timber harvesting. Within the next ten years, the Shepards will need to do some kind of harvest; for example, on the western track, where young trees with more sunlight have grown fast. It will be a minor change visually. The trick is to do that with minimal disruption to the trail system we have and still make use of the trails. The harvest will probably last for a couple of weeks in the winter. They will work with us to not disrupt any major events we have. Working together, as we've begun, is the way to go. The foresters are having the same conversation with the Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

They added that Nancy and Al are excited about having the trails on their land and want to be more in touch with what we're doing. The fact that we understand that theirs is private not public land is appreciated. It would be helpful to the foresters to have the property boundaries marked on future maps. They will provide Doug with shape files.

Ron mentioned Nancy and Al's question: Do the Hardwick Trails belong to a Vermont Trails System? Dawn wondered if that could refer to VAST. We belong to VT Trails and Greenways; however, Norma has been unable to contact them. That was just a membership and not statewide. The answer is that we don't think there is such a thing. If there were, we would belong to it. Pam will look it up at the Secretary of State's Office. Wayne, Doug, and the foresters will get together to walk the trails at the end of June or in July.

If we plan to work on Shepard property, they want to know and appreciate our willingness to work with them.

2. **Financials.** No news.
3. **Minutes.** Ron moved to approve the Minutes of May 2 and Dave seconded.

4. **Spring Festival Follow-up.** We had a really good bird walk with 13 people, several new to birding. The 5K went very well. The bike ride went pretty well—six people; the information table had good one on one conversations.
5. **Bike Instructor Course.** Norma passed around copies of Chris Ingram’s proposal to teach the course. He is requesting \$250, half the cost of the course. For funds, we have \$110 from discontinuing PowerShift and will receive about \$300 from the 5K race. We unanimously approved Chris’ request.
6. **Trails Excavation.** Norma passed around copies of Eric’s email regarding the costs breakdown for the proposed trail excavation work. Eric explained the need for major water damage renovation. This project would include from GMTCC up to the bridge—smooth, widen, ditch the trail, cut some trees. The driving force to do this now is that we have the money and the budget year ends June 30 when the money reverts to the general fund. The excavator Keith Woodward has proposed a date of June 13-15. Eric moved the project with the approximate cost of \$1,000. Lenore seconded. It passed unanimously.
7. **Dogs on the Trail.** Norma passed around copies of Lenore’s position paper that we can review, consider, and discuss at the next meeting. Lenore did some research and has seen two things pop up: The rail trail put out a notice that trails go through many towns that have leash laws and users need to abide by them. Hubbard Park in Montpelier is dealing with the same problem, and a reporter who went to cover the story was bitten. Lenore went through the survey feedback that includes many requests that we do something.
8. **“Little Library.”** This Wednesday, some of us will go out and nail down a site near the brook. Wayne has cleaned the area up to make it easier.
9. **July 9 Coin Drop, 9:00-11:00.** We need six people who commit to do this: Eric, Pam, Gail, Wayne, maybe Lenore, Emmet and Joe. Possibly the Ingrams.
10. **Pumpkins.** Pam hopes to grow 100 with an estimated weight of 15-20 lbs. Alex is contacting Heartbeet and High Mowing to see if there is the possibility of getting pumpkins from them.
11. **GMTCC/Hazen/Trails meeting** has not been scheduled yet.
12. **Signage.** Perry’s offer to make and donate a sign directing people to the Hardwick Trails, and affix it to the front porch outer wall at the Hardwick Inn was discussed. Pam moved, seconded by Joe to notify Perry to make this sign and thank him. Motion passed unanimously.
13. **Audio Trail.** Joe presented the idea that he speak with Stephanie Dunbar about developing an Audio Walking Trail through Hardwick. Hazen would be in the Center of the Audio Trail map. It would involve tying Atkins Field/Hazen/Hardwick Trails folks together to create this historical-type walk around town together. This project would help create Atkins Field as more of a Town Square. The Field would be the starting point, walking towards and over the bridge, along the Rail Trail, including Memorial, and end up maybe around the Hardwick Trails. Joe will keep us informed.
14. **Hardwick Trails Shirts.** Hardwick Trails shirts were handed out to those present who still needed them.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Trecartin and Pam Stonier

Next Meeting: July 11, 2016, 5:30 PM, at the Cabin