



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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LOIS TIMMS-FERRARA
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM
LINDA ANDERSON
JUDI MANFRE

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2018
Town Hall Meeting Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lauren Desrocher, Cheri Murphy, Rachel Dearbon, Pam McCormick, Lois Timms-Ferrara, Cynthia Van Zelm, Linda Anderson, Judi Manfre

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erin Stavens, Valerie Amsel

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Dinnie, Tom Palshaw

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Lauren Desrocher called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

Tom Palshaw (120 Pinney Street) stated that he maintains trails along the Hockanum River, and there was a bobcat sighting. August 1 was the date that the tracked bobcat collars were set to fall off; if anyone comes across a bobcat or one of their collars, they should email DEEP.CTWildlife@ct.gov or call (860) 424-3045 to report it, or call (860) 424-3011 or -3333 for a bear sighting. If anyone sees fisher cat roadkill in decent condition, the State Game Wardens would like to know for preservation and “show and tell” purposes.

He also reported that tree debris fell into the river along Lower Butcher Road and has dammed it up in spots; Tom was among the team that cleaned it out. He also said that he kayaked along the river down by the Stop and Shop in Vernon and there are four blocked locations there; they were able to get around them, but it was a struggle.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 1, 2018

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (ANDERSON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 1, 2018 MEETING MINUTES.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Trails of Treats Meeting – 8/18

No updates were given at this time.

B. Other

Lauren Desrocher and Erin Stavens attended the Inland Wetlands Agency meeting on August 13, as the Committee's request to install footbridges, install benches and to create and maintain a trail along Kimballs Brook was on the agenda for acceptance. This proposal was accepted under the condition that no existing standing trees were to be removed.

At least three large trees have been removed by the Metcalf Property; it is believed that these trees were on Town property, and the Committee has asked Public Works to notify them before any additional trees are removed. It was reported that a resident of 10 Cedarwood Drive had requested the removal of the trees. The Committee would like to reach a middle ground with this resident to resolve any concerns without escalating the situation, perhaps through a face to face discussion. Mr. Palshaw stated that there was a post near the radio station that directs walkers in the correct direction.

Mr. Palshaw let the Committee know about a "widowmaker" tree or branch on the Franklin Street Trails connecting Vernon to Ellington. Rachel Dearborn stated that she did not believe this was on Town property.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Autumn Public Hike at Sunset Hill – Saturday, September 22, 10:00 am

Linda Anderson asked if volunteers from the Sunset Hill hike could then go to the new trail to help build bridges; by combining the events; there may be more volunteers to assist the Committee. Ms. Anderson has a contact who would be willing to help build as well. Bruce Dinnie would like to meet with this contact to discuss what the plan would be in terms of the supplies needed to build the bridges so the Committee could have those things ready; Ms. Anderson said that she would get his contact information to Mr. Dinnie. However, the Committee will need a backup building plan if attendance at the hike is low. Ms. Anderson stated that she would get the information together by September 14 as she will be away for the event.

The new trail still needs the bridges built and perhaps a kiosk installed prior to a Grant Opening event. Ms. Anderson emailed Jim Matroni in the Technology Education Department at the middle school about building kiosks and is waiting to hear back. The Boy Scouts are also a viable option to reach out to for assistance with building kiosks; the Committee would provide the supplies. Ms. Anderson will reach out to them. November 23rd, the day after Thanksgiving, is the potential date of the opening of the new trail.

It was noted that for the Sunset Hill Hike, there is not a lot of parking. There is a new house being constructed that may block the access. The Committee will need to go and see the trail again to make sure it is being maintained before any publicity occurs about the hike. Lauren will go and check it out.

B. Farmer's Market Recap

Ms. van Zelm stated that the Farmer's Market went well; one t-shirt was sold. Many people asked for brochures. She mentioned that the Hartford Courant was there and they asked her and Ms. Anderson some questions about the Trails Committee. The reporter was interested in doing a segment and photo on the Trails for Treats. Cynthia also received the name of another volunteer for Trails for Treats. It was well worth being at the Farmers Market again. Cynthia recommends that the Committee look into purchasing a tent and a table, or checking with Bob Tedford about borrowing a table and tent.

C. Grant Opportunities

It was recommended that a special meeting be held to discuss grant opportunities. Ms. Desrocher wondered if purchasing land is included in the guidelines for the grant request. Mr. Dinnie said that he will check in on it. Ms. Dearborn will email the grant out so all of the members can read it and get ideas of what can be requested that may fit into the guidelines of the grant.

D. Other

Ms. Anderson recommended putting more details on the trails map to make it easier to read, which should be an easy fix. Ms. Dearborn asked if there was a preference on the way the map is printed and folded. Ms. Desrocher mentioned it will be a bi-fold. Ms. van Zelm recommended adding the Committee's Facebook page and logo on the map as well.

Mr. Dinnie mentioned that there is a group inquiring about a disc golf course, which needs some open space and some wooded area. This topic will be discussed further at the next meeting.

VI. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance

Ms. Desrocher asked if the Committee would lose any money that wasn't used from the budget. Ms. Timms-Ferrara would like to look into purchasing a kiosk. Bills have been being sent to the Town Hall; however, Ms. Timms-Ferrara would like to be the point person to handle the bills to keep track of what is going in and out; she suggested having a "wish list" on hand to think of long- and short-term needs. Ms. Desrocher mentioned that Mr. Tedford would like to offer extra t-shirts as well as extra tools. Ms. Timms-Ferrara would like to get more of a hold on the Committee's finances to see what they are spending. Ms. Anderson stated that they will be spending money on the Trail for Treats event; therefore there should be a budget for these events. The Committee should also keep track of what is gifted to them; they would also like to consider giving free t-shirts to the volunteers, as it's good publicity. Thank you notes should be sent to those who have gifted items. The Facebook logo, email address and the Ellington Trails Committee name should be on the new tee shirts if more are made.

B. Maintenance

Ms. Stavens was not in attendance at the meeting; the August clean-up event was cancelled.

C. Publicity/Community Reach-out

Ms. van Zelm mentioned the Hartford Courant's article and pictures about the Committee and the Trail for Treats event, and reiterated that the Farmers Market went well. Putting the Facebook link and logo to any marketing material is a good idea. The information about the Sunset Hill Hike and whether it will be combined with the new trail building should be finalized soon, in order to start getting the word out.

D. Planning/Development

There was no discussion regarding planning and developing.

VII. REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

A. Kimball Forest Updates

The Committee will be reaching out to key point people to get answers on the final details of the project.

B. Trail of Treats Updates

Ms. Anderson mentioned that the event currently has 17 vendors setting up booths; the YMCA hasn't yet officially committed. The Committee needs to send additional information to the vendors. October 4 is the date that vendors need to commit by. Ms. Anderson went over the details to be sent to vendors. Mr. Tedford will be arranging for a constable to be in attendance the night of the event. Mr. Dinnie offered to be a Gopher in case candy supplies run low. There was discussion on perhaps creating a brochure to hand out to the parents about the proposed Brookside path project.

Ms. Desrocher will ask her contact with the Ellington High School drama department to see if they want to be involved. Ms. Anderson recommends a large sign at Brookside to promote the event as well as a few for other main areas. At this point, the Committee's focus is on acquiring more vendors and then in October, they can focus on finalizing the details of the event.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (MCCORMICK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:47 PM.

Submitted by

