

**NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Meeting Wednesday, April 12, 2017**  
**6:30 P.M. Northfield Municipal Building**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Present: Ruth Ruttenberg, Leslie Matthews, Nathaniel Miller, Laura Hill-Eubanks, Jane Pekol

**II. SET/ADJUST AGENDA**

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** February 8, 2017; March 8, 2017

Approved 5-0-0

**V. DISCUSSION**

a. Stewardship Plan

Stewardship Plan is done! Documents have been merged. Leslie sent a link to the NCC. Next step is to send it back to Arrowwood. Questions on how they should be acknowledged ("with the help of" Arrowwood). Leslie will re-do the front page. Next Steps: Leslie will send Arrowwood a link to the final document. Arrowwood will do one Community and one Select Board forum.

Public forum would be a presentation, talk about why we created a Stewardship Plan. Location would probably be the library. Break the presentation into sections (i.e. Wildlife conservation, Recreational uses). Advertise as learning about the Town Forest—we could use the survey results from the 2015 Town Meeting and explain how the survey informed our decisions. If there are major objections, we could ask for people to weigh in on Front Porch Forum. The link should be shared on Front Porch Forum before the public forum.

We will ask Pam to figure out the date for the public hearing along with Jeff Schulz within about a month from now.

b. Back Roads Grant

Last month, the Selectboard determined that they were not interested in an MOU on the Backroads grant. They believe it is state interference in town's activities. For all practical purposes, the MOU is DOA. The Selectboard is not interested in getting advice from the state. Russ, as tree warden, should be on the crew that determines which trees get cut. We need to separate tree cutting from the MOU. They have cut Winch Hill and Bull Run. Smith Hill, West Hill, and Stony Brook are slated for cutting, along with Holstrom. Folks who live on Messier are upset with the cutting on Bull Run. The market for chips is down. Is this cutting still profitable enough for Limlaw? Ruth

believes that folks should be able to keep their own wood from these cuts, or, if landowner doesn't want it, to set up "free firewood" for the community. A program should support the intentional cutting of trees where necessary, but never clear-cutting. Is there room for a new group to form to help express some of the sentiment from the landowners and general community on the cutting? Ruth will seek advice from Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

c. Recreation Trails

Patrick (VYCC) and Russ will get together soon after Russ comes back. We will be on the early end of the VYCC schedule. We may be able to contract out some other improvements. Forests, Parks, and Rec is also doing a grant for Recreation in Town Forest.

d. Land Conservation and the Conservation Fund

Laura has been in contact with a TDS contact out of Wisconsin. She will find out the status of the land (assessed at about \$70,000) and whether or not they would be willing to donate or sell. A Conservation easement on the whole property, including the TDS piece, would be the best-case scenario. We can start fundraising whenever we'd like, but should figure out the asking price and the willingness of TDS to converse on this.

e. School Forest VLT Easement

Merger will be voted on May 2. Pam asked about a Conservation easement for the School Forest, we need the support of the School Board and Superintendent. Interest in rain barrel project which could raise some money. Friends of the Winooski built their own rain barrels for this purpose. This is the only way the project would net any significant money. The kids can paint them and it is an educational experience. Retail for \$60-70 as an auction.

f. GMCC Applications

Check with Pam about Conservation Camp applications.

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED): None.**

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30