

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT  
TOWN FOREST STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE  
Minutes of February 18, 2025**

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Jeremy Whalen, Russ Barrett, Ginny Kunkel, Colin Blackmon, Andrew Padilla. Public: Simon Pearish
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 21, 2025: Approved 4-0 (Andrew Joined after vote)
- IV. **AGENDA UPDATES OR ADDITIONS:** None
- V. **UPDATES & DISCUSSION**
  - a. **Shaw Outdoor Center Update**
    - Winter Carnival events at Shaw Center this past weekend was poorly attended.
    - FTX training will resume in March. Andrew will send out dates.
    - A few weeks ago, a company held a training in Cheney Field. Jeremy informed Andrew that there were fires in the wood line of the field and witnessed students using chainsaws to cut down trees for the fire. Andrew spoke with the company mentor and commandant staff about using the chainsaw. In the future, Andrew will be working to have an informational training session with company leadership, both mentors and students, to inform them of the property rules and boundaries. A member from TFSC will join to have a friendly and cooperative presence.
    - Andrew is working to meet with the disc golf planner and hopes to have a course design completed by spring.
    - Andrew is working on a new/updated website for the Shaw Center. He hopes to include a donation button for trail maintenance and grooming costs.
  - b. **Open Letter from Joe Zuaro:** Joe has seen an increase in usage on the summit trail he received approval for and wrote to inquire about protocol if someone is injured using the forest's backcountry.
    - The group discussed that backcountry activities are “at your own risk” and that any injury should be reported to 911.

- Andrew had said a state 911 coordinator reached out last fall looking for updated maps for first responders and he sent them the newest mapping VOREC had been developing.
  - A group discussion about adding some language on Trail Finders about backcountry risk similar to what Braintree Mountain has posted. We will also look at other backcountry areas to see how they address risk. We will also see if Forest and Parks has any standard language.
  - Jeremy proposed a motion to develop language for Trail Finders and an abbreviated version to post at Shaw and Green Mountain Health Center describing risk and to call 911 in an emergency. Motion Passed 5-0
  - Action Item: Jeremy will start developing language
- c. **Moving Forward, Together Vermont: Vermont's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan:** This plan was launched last week at the statehouse.
- Discussion around taking a deeper dive into the report and understanding how it can be useful to the Town Forest and Shaw Center. I.e., Grant opportunities.
  - Action item: Colin, Ginny, Russ will continue to read lengthy document for any parts that could be relevant to the Town Forest/Shaw
- d. **Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) update:** VYCC emailed Jeremy earlier this week to connect him with a new point of contact. He will reply and discuss the status of the ARPA funds work with her.
- e. **Town Forest Zoning:** Jeremy emailed Mitch to set dates for the working group to discuss zoning. Hoping to have an initial meeting soon
- f. **Spring Trail Workday:** We talked about starting to plan a spring workday for late May.
- Action Item: Jeremy will meet with Colin to discuss some dates and projects to bring back to the group next month
- VI. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED):** Simon listened in and thanked us for all the TFSC does.
- VII. **OTHER BUSINESS**
- a. **Town Forest management plan status**
- Action Item: Russ will check back in with Forester on status.
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT: 19:05**