

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**VOREC Grant Implementation Committee**  
**Minutes of October 21, 2024**

- I. Roll Call.** Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) Grant Implementation Committee Chair Deborah Zuaro, members Russ Barrett, Colin Bright, Kim Caldwell (absent), Melody Currier, Jason Endres, Lucas Herring, Andrew Padilla, and Lydia Petty.

Committee Chair Zuaro called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

- II. Public Participation (Scheduled):** None.

- III. Approval of Minutes: September 9, 2024.** Motion by Committee member Barrett, seconded by Committee member Petty, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

**IV. Updates**

- a. Wood & Wood Sign Fabrication.** Committee Chair Zuaro said the sign manufacturers are working on them and they should be finished by the end of November. Wood & Wood did have some questions about minimum sign height. They recommended increasing the height to make the sign blades more visible to trail hikers/bikers. Committee member Bright though that would be a good idea, especially in the winter when snow drifts can build up. The new minimum sign height now has been set at six feet and six inches (6'6") but signs at some locations will be slightly higher to create additional blade clearance. Committee member Endres will contact Wood & Wood about this.
- b. Budget.** Committee Chair Zuaro performed a quick review of grant budget remaining funds and has informed Town Manager Jeff Schulz that it seems likely all grant funds will be used before the project closeout. This includes the \$25,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds the Select Board members authorized for signage purchases. Committee Chair Zuaro noted that some expenses might need to be shifted over into different grant budget categories. Committee member Petty just wants to be sure that we don't go overbudget. Committee Chair Zuaro will provide the committee members with an update after she has been able to discuss the grant budget with Manager Schulz.

**V. Discussion**

- a. Process for Signage Installation.** Committee Chair Zuaro asked if Committee member Padilla still has Norwich University (NU) students willing to assist with signage installation by the Shaw Outdoor Center and along the trail system. He confirmed there are three (3) NU students now available and there should be more at a later date. They should be able to start digging post holes in the near future. Committee member Petty feels this work should start right away before the ground starts to freeze. The students also will need to track their workhours. There was some concern expressed about what would happen if we have an early snow this year before the signage is delivered. It also was suggested that a couple test holes could be done this weekend to determine the level of difficulty, how long it takes, etc. The holes will be covered with plywood and have warning signs attached. It was felt best that there be some local social media postings to keep residents informed of the process.

Committee member Petty thought that the local weather will largely determine whether the signage installation can be completed this year or if some or all of it will need to be postponed until next spring. Committee Chair Zuaro will contact Wood & Wood to see if the signposts could be delivered earlier if that would help speed up the installation process.

- b. Street Signs.** Committee Chair Zuaro contacted traffic sign manufacturer WorkSafe (Berlin VT) and received some directional sign image samples. These signs would be fitted to current traffic signposts and would direct people to the Shaw Outdoor Center, Town Forest access points, etc. The signs will be white with green lettering in order to differentiate them from normal street signs. As there were no objections, Committee Chair Zuaro will order the signs, which cost about \$27 each. As they will be single-sided and installed back-to-back, at least two of each design will have to be ordered.

## **VI. Other Business**

- a. Economic Impact Report.** Committee Chair Zuaro said the SE Group has completed this report and she had emailed copies to the committee members earlier today. She believes the completed documentation will meet the state grant closeout requirements. This information also will be provided to the Select Board members at their regular meeting of Tuesday, December 10, 2024. In addition, these documents have been posted on the municipal website ([www.northfield-vt.gov/town-forest](http://www.northfield-vt.gov/town-forest)). Committee member Petty suggested also posting links to the documents on local social media websites.
- b. Programming.** Committee Chair Zuaro noted the group events held over recent months in the Town Forest (i.e. yoga hikes, nature walks, etc.) have been a huge success. She added that the Town Forest Stewardship Committee (TFSC) members are trying to figure out how to budget for similar events in coming months (as the VOREC grant funds that paid for them is gone). Public interest was very impressive with attendees coming from neighboring towns.
- c. Next Meeting Date.** Since the regular committee meeting date in November falls on Veterans Day, Committee Chair Zuaro suggested meeting a week later (11/18/24) in the Municipal Building. The main topic would be an update on signage production and installation. This could be a relatively short meeting if there isn't that much new to report upon.

**VII. Public Participation (Unscheduled).** There was none.

**VIII. Adjournment.** Motion by Committee member Petty, seconded by Committee member Barrett, to adjourn. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth L. McCann*

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting.