

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 6:00 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common

Present: Selectboard members Laurie Colgan, Chris Martin and Andy Perchlik; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Stranahan Committee Members Jenny Warshow, Ed Jalbert and Diana Batzel; Visitors David Warshow, James Arisman, Anne Miller, Rich Phillips

At 6:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Andy Perchlik

Changes to Agenda: Bobbi has a list of appointed terms that are expiring. Jenny and Ed are here to present the work that they have done on the Stranahan Town Forest logging map.

Minutes: The Board approved the minutes of the February 2, 2016 meeting.

Stranahan Logging: Ed and Jenny presented a map showing the areas that they both agreed could be considered for logging. The map shows the vernal pool areas that are identified in the easement, and the natural areas identified in the management plan. Ed explained that while some logging could be done in the buffer areas, it would have to be done to strict stocking level standards and might not be worth it. Ed recommended that the historical areas should be inventoried before logging is considered in those areas; they are not included in the potential logging areas that they highlighted on the map. There is a strip along the Thompson Road that would be left so that walkers wouldn't see the logging. Ed feels that this strip could be narrower than what is currently shown on the map. There are a couple of places where fields are starting to grow in, and these areas could be cut to keep the fields open.

Andy asked what the next step would be. Ed stated that the next step would be to inventory the timber. He stated that we don't have an accurate timber tally because some stands haven't been tallied in several years, and some areas have been subject to a windstorm since they were tallied.

Chris stated that he thought the easement language mostly protected the vernal pool areas. Ed stated that the easement and current best practices allow skidding across streams if the weather is cold enough, but the recent winters have been difficult for logging. He also stated that it might be better to do one large logging job and then not have to do logging for many years. This echoes an earlier decision by the Selectboard.

Ed also suggested that the town could consider a few small patch cuts to improve wildlife habitat, because the forest is mostly even-aged.

Jenny stated that Nicko Rubin would like to bring students in to trim the heirloom apples at no charge.

Bike Path: Ed suggested a few more areas that could be used for the bike path, but he hopes the areas will not be off limits to logging because of the bike path.

Stranahan Management Plan: Laurie suggested that the Board should look at the maps that have been given, look at the bike path issue, and then present them to the public at their meeting on March 15th. Andy has made edits to the plan. He feels that if there are more edits to come, we could post it now as a draft or the Board could talk about it after town meeting and then release it. The Board decided to post it but note that it is a draft and they will try to finalize it on March 1st. Their goal is to have it ready for a public hearing on the 15th. They will know after their meeting on March 1st if they are ready to warn the hearing.

Bike Path: The bike club has asked for permission to change the location of the first trail slightly, to go across the field that Rich has bushogged. This would avoid a wet area in the corner of the field where they had been approved to go. Anne suggested that it would cause less disturbance in the field than in the woods. Jenny asked that if they are going to connect to the moon field trail, they should be asked to help fix up that trail.

Andy moved to accept the proposal from the Bike club to amend the MOU for the portion of the trail that goes through Rich's field, and to invite them to a future meeting to discuss other bike trail issues. Chris seconded – all in favor. Andy moved to table the proposal for a new trail. Chris seconded – all in favor.

Other Stranahan Business: Bobbi showed the Board a petition in support of the Stranahan Town Forest that has been received with 9 signatures, 5 of residents/taxpayers and 4 of non-residents/non-taxpayers.

Animal Complaints: Jo Guertin picked up abandoned rabbits and chickens at a property on Holt Road belonging to William Knowles. She will keep them unless an owner comes forward to claim them. The Town received information about unlicensed dogs at the Carpenter house on School Street. The dog officer will be asked to impound them if they are not licensed.

Safety Concerns: The Selectboard received a letter regarding safety concerns over living conditions at a property on Maple Hill Road or Holt Road, but the address of the property has not been determined. The Health Officer will investigate.

Appointments: The Board received two applications for appointment to the Conservation Commission. The vacancy hasn't been advertised yet, so the Board did not make any decision. The vacancy will be announced at town meeting.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: FEMA has finally approved the Town's hazard mitigation plan, making the Town eligible for funds in case of a declared emergency.

Old Schoolhouse Common: FEMA issued a Letter of Map Amendment, acknowledging that the building is not in the flood plain.

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and signed reports for General Expenses and Payroll. They executed a deed for one cemetery lot.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the February 24, 2016 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
