

Town of North Yarmouth
Parks and Recreation Committee
Meeting Agenda

August 5, 2020

Wescustogo Hall and Community Center, Community Room, 7:00pm

Members Present: Bryan Emerson (chair), Scott Kerr, Bob Abbott, Anne Lang

Guests: Rosemary Roy, town manager; Bobby Silcott, Animal Control officer; Clark Baston, Public Works; Alan Stearns, Royal River Conservation Trust; Steve Palmer, Living Well Committee

I. Call to Order

a. 7:06 pm

II. Minutes Approval

- a.** Scott moves to accept as presented
- b.** Bob seconds
- c.** Unanimous motion

III. Parks and Recreation Business

- a. Town Forest discussion with Clark
 - i. Due to off leash dog complaints, P&R proposes to use the large parcel of the town forest as an off-leash dog park and keep all other parks on-leash only
 - 1. Bobby Silcott, ACO, comments that enforcement is the key to all ordinances, but given he only works 8 hrs/week plus on call here, most of it is on the honor system, as he patrols randomly
 - a. Most violations of animal ordinances are 1x=fine, 2x=double fine, 3x=court
 - b. The #1 complaint he receives is people not cleaning up after their dogs
 - 2. The new Animal Control ordinance was supposed to go through at Town Meeting
 - a. Yarmouth allows off leash 100 yards from public areas (parking lots, etc.)
 - b. Cumberland is off leash at the Town Forest ONLY

Commented [AL1]: Or is it the animal control language in our parks ordinance?

- i. They use a brochure with a QR code to all ordinance language
 - c. For Knight's Pond, both towns must agree – Cumberland is currently off-leash there
 - d. If we want to pass this change of Town Forest to dog park, now is that time before Town Meeting language approval
 - 3. Dogs in the Town Forest would still need to be under voice control per state law
 - 4. Next Steps: Bobby & Rosemary to insert proper wording into both the Parks and Animal Control ordinances before an October town meeting and send to P&R before any changes made to Town Forest
- ii. YWD boundaries
 - 1. Committee to figure out a time to walk it with Clark to determine just where the lines are
- iii. Parking area and trail prep
 - 1. Fire Chief Payson will most likely want uniform trail width, if it is gravel
 - a. Committee is currently leaning towards just clearing out brush to widen the trail
 - b. Wet areas are of concern
 - c. The path itself doesn't have to be 7', but clearance on both sides + the trail should = 7'
 - d. RRCT offers to help lay it out and volunteer labor on trail crew days
 - i. Clark can bush hog some of it, to allow for a 6-8 car parking area
 - 1. Town Excavator is meant to be used on blacktop, but could potentially rent something else
 - e. Potentially a fall clean up day aimed at dog owners & local Boy Scout troops with a pre-established layout
- iv. Steve Palmer suggests considering Westcustogo Park as a dog park in addition to Town Forest
 - 1. Not a huge draw like the other parks, because there are no trails
 - 2. Town Forest has a lot of hunters (deer bowhunting)
 - 3. Bobby, ACO, echoes that Westcustogo seems to be the least used park
 - 4. Potential to do 2 parks non-leashed (but still voice control!)
 - a. Can do trial period first
 - 5. Scott concern re: gate closing @ Westcustogo in the winter
 - a. Push gate back 60' to let people still park and use it

6. Bob makes motion that OTHP & Chandler Brook are leash-only parks
 - a. Scott seconds, unanimous motion
 - b. Rosemary to send ordinance changes
 - c. P&R members to scout out Town Forest with Clark
- b. Connectivity Update from Alan Stearns
 - i. The rights that North Yarmouth has on the snowmobile trail from Oak Hill Rd/Rt 9 through Lufkin Rd (Old Range Rd?) would be best served to have in writing in regards to public access not in the winter
 1. Snowmobile trail currently goes down Sweetser Rd and is landowner access, not a public way/rangeway in terms of managing recreation
 2. Alan recommends legal measures, albeit with no sense of urgency
 3. Bob would like us to scout it out to make a more informed decision
 - ii. Old railroad bed/Sam Ristich corridor
 1. Does it connect to RT 231?
 2. There should also be something in writing about this in a management plan in terms of knowing exactly what we own
 - iii. Memak Preserve
 1. Ed & Joyce Gervais are donating 35 acres (leash free!)
 - a. RRCT raising money for kiosk, parking area, legal fees, etc.
 - b. Will be bike & snowmobile friendly land
 - iv. Pineland
 1. The state is investing money into Pineland lands at the north end of NY
 - a. Trails signs, etc
- c. Management Plan
 - i. Should we have 1 plan for all parks or should each park have its own?
 - ii. Bryan reached out to Ben Smith about a plan and is waiting to hear back
 1. Bringing someone on to draft this will be necessary and helpful
 - iii. No current plan for Chandler Brook puts RRCT in a tough place re: conservation easement for 9 years – PRIORITY
 1. Affects all our credibility
 - iv. P&R will start drafting templates before September meeting
- d. OTHP
 - i. Boardwalk removal
 1. The email from David (former Boy Scout's dad) is being treated as a concession to remove it
 2. Factors for removing it
 - a. Safety
 - i. Gets very icy in winter

- ii. Attracts stinging insect nests/hives underneath in warm weather
 - 3. Clark will wait until late fall/winter when things dry out to remove it
 - ii. The bridge on the back trail also needs attention
 - iii. Dead trees
 - 1. Rosemary scouted this out twice
 - a. Along the entrance to the right slope
 - i. If trees are cleared and filled in with other plants, could be sledding hill
 - ii. Dead conifers and cherry trees to come down will aid future kite festivals
 - 1. US Fish & Wildlife easement language may impact this
- e. Park signs
 - i. Suggested edits – dogs on leash at all times? Does this need to go to Select Board?
 - 1. Will wait until the animal control language is confirmed
 - ii. Will include “fireworks prohibited”
- f. New members
 - i. Bryan reached out to Nicole Hughes as a potential member who had submitted an application
 - 1. She is currently pregnant and does not want to do in person meetings at this time
- g. Baston Park
 - i. Sevee & Maher (?) still in process of researching dredging – will probably not get off the ground until next year
 - 1. In the meantime, Public Works will clean it up
 - ii. How will potential Yarmouth dam removal affect our water levels?
 - 1. Bridge St dam removal would have no impact
 - 2. East Elm St dam removal would, but that will probably not happen for 10-20 years and would cause about a 5’ reduction at OTHP
 - a. Still worth pursuing access now
- h. Chandler Brook
 - i. Field should be hayed, but if it can’t be (bobolinks, etc) maybe turn into a migratory milkweed stop for monarchs
 - 1. Will have to remove easement plan
- i. Set Next Meeting Date
 - i. Wednesday, September 2, 7 pm @ WHACC

IV. Adjournment