

North Yarmouth Parks and Recreation

*Minutes of Meeting July 7, 2021
6:30 PM*

Wescustogo Hall Community Center

- I. Call to Order.** In attendance: Robert Abbott, Steven Palmer, Scott Kerr, (Anne Lang declined reappointment), (Ted Danforth on medical leave) , Draven Walker, Alan Stearns and Adam Pereira of RRCT, visitors: Laurie Gilman and Elise Kern
- II. Minutes Approval:** Moved, Seconded and voted 3 to 0 to approve the prior meeting minutes
- III. New Business**
 1. Elections – Chairperson and Secretary
SK moved and SP seconded RA to be chair. Voted 3 to 0 to elect RA Chair. None volunteered to be nominated to secretary. Selection tabled until new members are appointed. SK reluctantly agreed to take minutes for this meeting.
 2. Donations for memorials
Discussion included the need for a policy decision and the need for a policy, a general disinclination to include non-park donor memorials in the parks, what body needed to approve a policy, learning how other municipalities deal with the subject. Subject was tabled to allow research on procedures to develop a policy and what a policy might look like.
 3. Additional members for the committee
After Town meeting a Town resident pointed out that his reading of the Town Charter and referenced Maine statutes called for Charter amendments to be enacted by secret ballot. Town officials are researching this subject with the Maine Municipal Association. At the SB meeting the SB reappointed RA and SK. The SB has received several applications to P&R. Some were read until after the extended closure of the Town Office. SK suggested to the SB that committee appointments be made as part of an assessment of committee goals and the skills etc. of applicants to meet the needs of the committee. SP spoke about the subject. The SB seemed inclined to have a more extensive review of applications than may have been recent practice and tabled further appointments until their next meeting. The SB seemed to be moving toward a process that was used in its recent appointment of a member of the school board.

4. Committee's mission – Recreational aspect

Discussion included the role of P&R, Living Well, the Events Committee in recreation on the land that P&R supervises and does the Committee name suggest that the role is one of recreational activities or recreational facilities. Unfortunately this conversation could have been more focused if reference had been made to the Town Charter which in Article IV – 2 – d – 1 says "The P&R Committee will advise the town and municipal officers on matters of parks and recreation and supervise any parks and recreation programs by the town."

Discussion also included:

A new ad hoc committee is being discussed by the SB re: a playground.

Who manages the softball field on the NYMS land off Parsonage Road.

Who manages Sharp's Field?

5. Planning / prioritizing

No focused discussion.

6. Connecting SRNT to EHTF

Discussion included:

Is there any legal document giving the snowmobile clubs a right to cross the private property on the south side of Oak Hill Road in an area where the road is on the far south side of the road limits to allow the road to be further from the brick house on north side of the road which was built close to the roadway. In a cursory review AS found nothing in the CCRD.

Per a court order relative to the development of the Oak Hill subdivision the Town has the rights to access its properties that abut Oak Hill Road which has a private road sign but is a road built by a private individual on land that the Town and the public has the rights of passage.

Walkers, bicyclists and motorists use Oak Hill Road. To avoid driving snowmobiles on OHR the snowmobile club has some agreement to use the abutting property. We will try to learn what this agreement is and pursue the concept of a formal agreement.

On the subject of connectivity, AP talked about connectivity and trails in terms of the Yarmouth Water District land next to Rte. 9 on Sweetser Road and its newly acquired old gravel pit further southeast on Sweetser Road past The Lane and his discussions with Eric Gagnon, the Superintendent of the YWD.

IV. Old Business

1. Regulations for use of parks – review and plans

The committee's proposed rules for the use of the parks including smoking and dogs and leashes were defeated at a special Town Meeting held for the purpose of voting on those rules and not on other items. The attendees were primarily people who objected to the limitations on off-leash use.

Some of the people who spoke against passage pointed out existing inconsistencies in the existing rules and objected to the proposed alternating days in the two largest parks.

Discussion included how to modify the rules to deal with concerns which included alternating days overloading the parks with dogs and their parking areas with cars and reproposing amended rules after a process that encourages more people to participate rather than just to object after the fact at a general rather than specific purpose Town Meeting where one might expect a broader representation of interests including folks who complained about being assaulted by loose dogs.

Draven will pursue how the Town Office staff might keep track of complaints made to the office. The lack of data about complaints was a major talking point for people who objected to more owner control of their dogs.

2. Invasives planning

The Town was applied for a planning grant by the Maine Forest Service to address invasives in the Old Town House Park and in the ~45 acres Town Forest. The Town Forest application was approved for up to \$400. No denial or comment was received regarding the OTHP application.

SK talked with Paul Larrivee who is the forester who has helped the committee and Town and who made us aware of the grants to plan and attack invasives and assisted in the application preparation about what scope the Town should apply for to enhance the likelihood of obtaining the grant which PL pursued with the Forestry Service and some industrial engineering aspects of the project. His contact was surprised that the OTHP application had not been approved and wondered if it had been received by the service. Draven resent or reapplied for a second round of funding.

3. Sam Ristich Nature Trail update

A motion to accept Mr. Dawson's proposal to rebuild the steps etc. at the railroad bed end to the trail within the ~22-acre EHTF was made, seconded and passed 3 to 0.

4. Chandler Brook management plan - Bob

After some discussion of the need and scope of a management plan the committee moved, seconded and voted 3 to 0 to take AS up on his offer to draft a management plan that meets the minimal requirements of the conservation easement in a manner that allows subsequent additions as time and consensus allows.

There was discussion of various mowing possibilities that SP can expand on. Laurie Gilman described her experience in other places with bobolinks and her discussion with Ag Allies about balancing bobolink nesting and hay harvesting and field maintenance. It was moved, seconded and voted 3 to 0

that Steve and Laurie would continue discussions with Ag Allies and others to develop plans for the committee's further discussion.

5. Further development of CB north field / publicizing it
SP will describe what he presented
6. Baston update
SP will further describe what has developed

V. Round Robin

SK reported that Paul Larrivee has contacted Maine Wood Treeters which recently acquired a mill to process red pine for its pressure treating plant which will provide the Town with a market for its red pine on the ~45 acre EHTF which during the last harvest had to trucked to Canada.

Paul has talked with Todd who conducted the last harvest and Todd can continue the red pine and spruce harvest if the weather cooperates and the ground stays dry.

Laurie Gilman and Elise Kern separately described their individual interests in P&R and in being appointed by the SB to the committee.

VI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was moved, second and unanimously approved.