

# North Yarmouth Parks and Recreation Committee

March 2, 2022 at Wescustogo Community Center

## Minutes

- I. Call to Order at 6:34pm. Present: Kim Merrill, Steve Palmer, Scott Kerr, Bob Abbott, Elise Kern.  
Absent: Laurie Gilman
- I. Announcements: none
- II. Approval of Minutes. Scott requests to add a footer with the date for all minutes documents.  
Meeting minutes approved 5-0.
- III. Public Comment.
  - a. Rachel Whitmarsh: Asked whether there is a consolidated set of map trails on the town website, as availability of these would help potential sports teams, training teams, etc, so they can see distances of various trails within our lands. Scott agreed that this is needed and would be a valuable service to our public. Rachel also expressed interest in photographing trails for our publicity and marketing purposes. Committee discussed the potential to take the maps currently held by the RRCT and leverage on our site, after gathering permission.
  - b. Follow-Ups: **Bob and Elise** to pursue availability of existing maps on NYPR website.
- IV. New Business
  - a. Select Board and P&R Mission, the Recreation component, etc.
    - i. Scott met with Town Manager, made some progress on determining the parameters of the Committee mission. Committee discussed ways to engage with the Select Board to refine mission and direction. Bob raised the point that we may want to increase the focus on conservation as part of our mission, vs focusing on recreation, as there is no longer a conservation commission or committee within North Yarmouth. Committee discussed potentially offering a regular (perhaps annual) public forum to converse with the public about our mission and work, and how it differs from other committees in town.
  - b. Royal River: Trees in and across river
    - i. Steve spoke with Allison Sirois at DEP about prospect of pre-emptively removing trees that are in danger of falling into the river, she indicated that it is a local issue not something they address (though they do support it and encourage it).
    - ii. Scott recommends assessing how many trees are currently in danger of falling into the river.
    - iii. Follow up: **Steve** to ask Steve Foster if his drone footage could be used to perform this assessment, which could ideally be done in April to maximize seasonal visibility.
  - c. Notices for kiosks, website and Facebook page about reporting damage and dangers
    - i. Pass on topic for this month due to Laurie's absence.
- V. Old Business
  - a. New committee member recommendations for selection by Select Board. Select Board Charge to NYPR. Committee Purpose and Tasks, Job description. Skills and interests sought.
    - i. Pass on topic this month, Scott and Laurie will continue to discuss.
  - b. Virtual meeting policy. Public hearing

- i. Scott sent email to Committee with his input on potential text. Scott reviewed Town policy and does not find it to be adequate.
- c. Financial: Budget and Monthly Accounting. Operating and Reserve budgets
  - i. Draven and Diane have already prepared preliminary figures for next fiscal year, Scott to confirm with them.

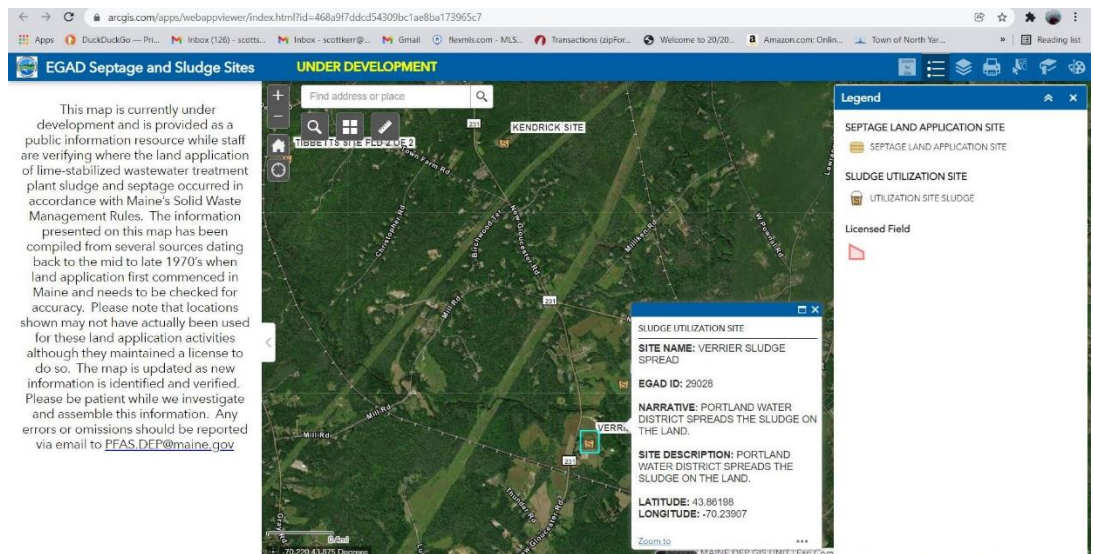
## VI. ALL PARKS

- a. Picnic Tables, ordered, receipt date estimate and interface with Clark
  - i. Draven and office staff have placed the order
  - ii. Follow-Up: Steve to inquire about delivery date so installation can be coordinated with the Public Works team.
- b. Sign refurbishing, replacement and additions
  - i. No additional updates.
- c. Recurring items and updates
  - i. No updates
- d. History of the Parks and Forests CB
  - i. Scott has received some documentation that he is assimilating into a comprehensive document to share in the future.
- e. Communications: Facebook Page, Review, All Trails etc.
  - i. Elise reviewed report created and shared with Committee via email outlining our current presence on Facebook, AllTrails, and Google Places. Document appended to end of meeting minutes.
  - ii. Committee requested Elise pursue adding missing parks to noted channels (Facebook, AllTrails, Google Places, etc) and ensure completeness and accuracy of these listings.
  - iii. Bob requested the inclusion of Knight's Pond in any listings as it is also part of North Yarmouth, Committee discussed that it may be ideal to publicize this once new trail entering Knight's Pond from North Yarmouth is established.
  - iv. Follow-Ups: Elise to update listings as noted with missing information, and provide updated communications review to Committee quarterly.
- f. Invasives: Work plan with Paul Larrivee, Clark Baston and Eric Lemke
  - i. Plan for balance of 2021-2022. Scott received some communications from the state re: the grant application, he forwarded it to Paul to determine action.
  - ii. Remaining funds for invasive control in current fiscal year budget need to be spent this spring or they will be forfeited.

## VII. Individual Parks

- a. Old Town House Park (OTHP)
  - i. Removal of Dead Trees. Completed by Public Works team. Trees were removed, not chipped on site due to equipment difficulties.
- b. Chandler Brook (CB)
  - i. South Field. Ag Allies Presentation and Contract
    - 1. Updated document received from Ag Allies today, Scott will review.
  - ii. North Field. Field and habitat maintenance. Inspection with Joe Anderson.
    - 1. Committee discussed challenges in drafting site management plan. The main issue is related to a small area at the riverbend subject to contradictory stipulations of not mowing within 100 feet of the river to forestall erosion yet also requiring mowing to maintain an open field.

2. Steve noted that we do not currently have a Management Plan in place for the entire preserve, which is also needed to complement this North Field plan.
  3. Follow-Up: Scott, Steve, and Joe to discuss plan moving forward. Scott to contact RRCT in regard to an existing memorandum of understanding about this preserve made between Bureau of Public Lands and RRCT.
- iii. Newsletter article
    1. To be published soon
  - iv. Trail Closure and sign
    1. Bob created sign and is getting it laminated, then will be installed. RRCT also offered to help place brush on the closed trail section to deter traffic.
    2. Follow-Up: Elise to determine how to update existing digital maps online to show closure of the trail, and will share closure on Facebook once complete.
- c. Baston Park (BP)
    - i. Yarmouth Dam Removal. Water Depth. DEP application process
      1. RRCT provided brief update to SB at this week's meeting, Corps reported that they will be wrapping up assessment of dam removal impact this spring. Corps representative indicated river will drop 5 to 6 feet at the dam site once the removal is completed. However the expected level drop upriver at Baston is unknown. They indicated that a hydrology study will also be completed, perhaps this fall.
      2. Scott to follow up with Corps representative who spoke at SB meeting to understand more information.
  - d. Eleanor Hayes Town Forest (EHTF)
    - i. Invasives
      1. Forest Service sent email to Scott and he will update Committee on status as it evolves.
    - ii. Land Survey
      1. No update
  - e. Wescustogo – PWD sludge spreading
    - i. Records recently brought to the Committee's attention indicate that PWD spread sludge on affected lands at Wescustogo back in 1992. Scott communicated with Victoria Eleftheriou (Deputy Director at Maine DEP Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management) to obtain maps and records. According to their records, 255 cubic yards of lime-stabilized wastewater treatment plant sludge from the Portland Water District were land applied at the site in 1992. Based on their criterion, this is a lower level Tier III, and is not expected to be sampled for testing for at least a year or two.
    - ii. Committee discussed whether signage should be obtained from DEP to indicate presence, and provide fair warning to the public, or whether Committee should discuss this with the Select Board. Location is 400 feet removed from the river.



- iii. Follow-Up: Scott to inquire with DEP about notices, signs, etc that can be provided. Also will communicate with SB and Town Manager to ensure their awareness.

## VIII. Round Robin

- a. Bob – sent email to Committee that was suggested by a resident, advocating for a campaign that encourages dog owners to take the initiative to not only clean up after their dog but an additional dog dropping as well, this dog waste issue is especially prevalent at Old Town House Park. Kim suggested adding an additional trash can near the hill that goes down to the lower field so that there is an easy receptacle past the entrance so that owners have less excuse to not clean up.
  - i. Follow-up: Steve to follow up with Clark about adding this trash can.
- b. Steve: Living Well committee meeting discussed the possibility of adding a Story Walk through the Veteran's Park, and the Sam Ristich trail. Steve indicated they should confer with NYPR committee about appropriateness of using the trail for this purpose. This would be a permanent installation with changing content. Bob mentioned the desire to recreate some of the educational content previously discussed along this trail when Sam Ristich himself conducted walks on this land.
- c. Scott: would like to pursue revisiting ordinances about dog leashing at parks, and also adopting the state statute on dogs in parks. A new ordinance could not be completed in time to be a warrant at this year's town meeting, however voting to simply accept the state statute as currently written could potentially be completed in time (Scott to follow up with Brian). Current state law only states that all dogs off their own property must be under owner control (it does not clarify the nature of the control nor mandate the use of a lease).
- d. Bob noted his appreciation of the recent town newsletter, specifically the profile of the new Wild Seed Organization sharing the Toots building. He would like to consider having a representative from this group come share information with us, and potentially pursue using some of our parks for a demonstration site and add wildflowers to them.
- e. Scott – communications ongoing with Clark about spraying for Brown Tail Moth in Baston Park, as this has trees over where people congregate and therefore could be an area of concern. Steve noted that the town is requesting \$27k for spraying at multiple locations. Bob attended a recent webinar on this topic and will share additional content with the Committee at the next meeting.

- f. Bob – on topic of Emerald Ash Borer (a concern at Baston Park), guidance was given to wait and not cut them down preemptively, as some will survive an infestation.

IX. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 6, 2022

X. Future Agenda Items - Next Meeting and Subsequent meetings

XI. Adjournment – 8:35pm

# I. North Yarmouth Parks & Recreation Committee

## Communications Channels Status Report

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

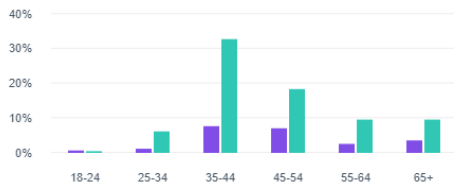
### Managed Channels (under our direct control)

#### Parks & Rec Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/nyparksandrec>

- 600 Followers, 4 new in last 28 days
- 6 posts in the last 90 days
- Average post reach: 166 people
- Average post engagement: 13 people

#### Age and Gender

Men 22.90%  
Women 77.10%



#### Location

Cities Countries

North Yarmouth, ME	210
Cumberland Center, ME	71
Yarmouth, ME	50
Portland, ME	48
Cumberland Center Station, ME	30

#### Park “Check-In” Locations on Facebook:

Unclear who originally set these up (circa 2015/2016) and who controls them. “Learn More” link leads to defunct page on northyarmouth.org website.

#### Old Town House Park: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Old-Town-House-Park/402617550135482>

19 likes, 307 people have checked in here

#### Chandler Brook Preserve (2 locations):

“Local Business” page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Chandler-Brook-Preserve/350374471710046>

23 likes, 237 people checked in here

“Park” page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Chandler-Brook-Preserve-North-Yarmouth/550726234945739>

0 people like, 2 people checked in here

#### Sam Ristich Nature Trail:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sam%20Ristich%20Nature%20Trail/261043164283258/>

1 like, 2 people checked in here

**No page listings:** Wescustogo Park, Baston Park, Eleanor Hayes Town Forest

## **AllTrails**

Popular hiking app and website that details parks, offers trail maps, and gathers user reviews. Park listings can be submitted by any user. Suggestions for edits and content corrections can be submitted by any user.

**1. Old Town House Park:** <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/maine/old-town-house-park-trails>

Average rating: 3.8 out of 5 stars.

*Description: "The trails at Old Town House Park meander through wide, open fields, along the Royal River and through some riverside woodlands, and provide primarily easy walking opportunities. Begin at the kiosk by the main parking lot on Route 9.*

*Formerly owned by Gillespie Farms, this 55 acre park was purchased by the town in 1997. Many people remember going to this location as children for a hay ride and to pick out their pumpkins for Halloween."*

**2. Chandler Brook Preserve Loop:** <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/maine/chandler-brook-preserve-loop>

Average rating: 4.0 out of 5 stars

*Description: "The Chandler Brook Preserve includes remnants of an old farm, including two large hay fields and a hemlock forest. Visitors will find well-worn, natural paths in the forest and along the brook. These trails connect to the mowed paths around the perimeter of the fields. (Some of the lowland trails can be wet in sections after heavy rains and in the spring.) All trails are easily accessed from the parking area. This preserve provides excellent bird-watching opportunities."*

**3. Sam Ristich Nature Trail:** <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/maine/sam-ristich-nature-trail>

Average rating: 4.0 out of 5 stars

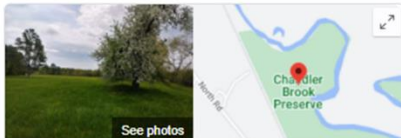
*Description: "Sam Ristich Nature Trail is a 3.2 mile moderately trafficked out and back trail located near North Yarmouth, Maine that offers the chance to see wildlife and is good for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for hiking, bird watching, and snowshoeing and is accessible year-round. Dogs are also able to use this trail."*

Not listed on AllTrails: Wescustogo Park, Eleanor Hayes Town Forest, Baston Park

## **Google Places**

Informational listing tied to map locations, shows at top right when searching for a specific location. Reviews can be made by anyone, some include photos. Option to "claim this business" to make updates, or simply suggest an update.





## Chandler Brook Preserve

Website Directions Save Call

4.5 ★★★★★ 23 Google reviews

Park in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: North Yarmouth Town Hall, 10 Village Square Rd, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

Hours: Open - Closes 5PM

Phone: (207) 829-3705

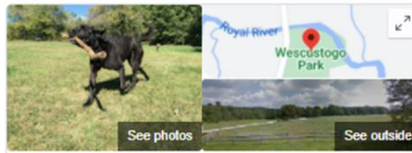
[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews

- "Nice place to walk dog" ★★★★★
- "Love taking the dogs here to run around off-leash." ★★★★★
- "Great place for pets/family!" ★★★★★



## Wescustogo Park

Website Directions Save Call

4.7 ★★★★★ 12 Google reviews

Park in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: New Gloucester Rd, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

Hours: Open - Closes 5PM

Phone: (207) 829-3705

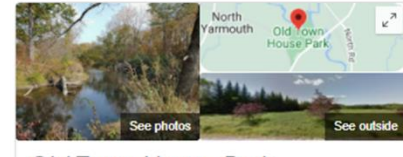
[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews

- "A nice open space for dogs to run." ★★★★★
- "Perfect place to take a dog or children on a hot day." ★★★★★
- "A small gem with rarely many people." ★★★★★



## Old Town House Park

Website Directions Save Call

4.5 ★★★★★ 32 Google reviews

Park in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: Memorial Hwy, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

Hours: Open - Closes 5PM

Phone: (207) 829-3705

[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

Popular times

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

1 PM: Usually not busy

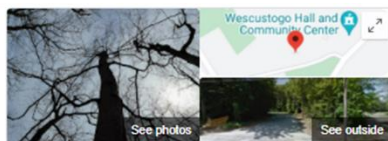
[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews from the web

4/5 AllTrails 51 reviews

Reviews

- "Great place to bring the dogs for an off-leash run in fields and woods." ★★★★★
- "Dog friendly, soccer fields, great summer and winter trails" ★★★★★
- "Lovely well groomed hiking trails" ★★★★★



## Sam Ristich Nature Trail

Website Directions Save

3.5 ★★★★★ 2 Google reviews

Hiking area in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: North Yarmouth, ME 04097

[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

Add missing information  
[Add place's phone number](#)  
[Add business hours](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

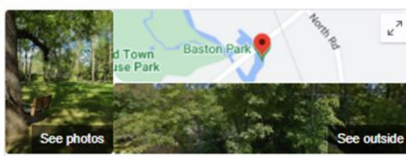
[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews from the web

3.5/5 AllTrails 22 reviews

Reviews

2 Google reviews



## Baston Park

Directions Save

4.4 ★★★★★ 8 Google reviews

Park in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: 497-551 State Rte 9, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

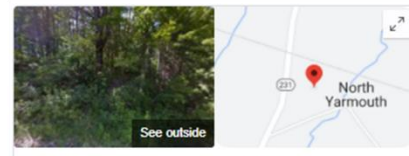
Add missing information  
[Add place's phone number](#)  
[Add business hours](#)  
[Add website](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews

- "Upon further investigation, I found some really nice Trails across the street." ★★★★★
- "Lots of space to enjoy outdoors" ★★★★★



## Eleanor Hayes Forest

Website Directions Save

5.0 ★★★★★ 1 Google review

Park in North Yarmouth, Maine

Address: 16 Wescustogo Ln, North Yarmouth, ME 04097

Hours: Open now · [Add full hours](#)

[Suggest an edit](#) · [Own this business?](#)

Add missing information  
[Add place's phone number](#)  
[Add business hours](#)

Questions & answers  
[Be the first to ask a question](#)

[Send to your phone](#)

Reviews

1 Google review