



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

CHERI MURPHY
RECORDING SECRETARY

LAUREN DESROCHER
CHAIRMAN

RACHEL DEARBORN
VICE CHAIRMAN

VALERIE AMSEL
PAM MCCORMICK
ERIN STAVENS
LOIS TIMMS-FERRARA
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM
LINDA ANDERSON
JUDI MANFRE

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2019
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Valerie Amsel, Judi Manfre, Lauren Desrocher, Pam McCormick, Linda Anderson, Lois Timms-Ferrara

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rachel Dearborn, Cynthia van Zelm, Cheri Murphy, Erin Stavens

OTHERS PRESENT: Ann McLaughlin, Tom Palshaw, Holly Brunette, David Desrocher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Desrocher called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

Tom Palshaw, 120 Pinney Street and a member of the Hockanum River Committee (HRC), talked about the use of power tools on trails. He read a section of the HRC minutes that indicated the Board of Selectmen approval regarding the use of power tools on trails, with the requirement that all users complete safety training through the Public Works Department. Interested parties must submit a training completion form to the First Selectman's Office. A one-hour safety course will be implemented to allow these tools to be used. The definition of "power tool" in this instance includes drills, chainsaws, trim stringers, and other similar equipment. Anyone volunteering to help the Trails Committee in this capacity must complete this training; Mr. Palshaw has volunteered to arrange these sessions.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Desrocher and Ms. Anderson pointed out that the August minutes stated that the Botanical Walk was on August 22, when it was actually held on August 21.

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (MANFRE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 7, 2019 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Cheri Murphy has submitted her resignation, likely to be accepted at the September 9, 2019 Board of Selectmen meeting. Ann McLaughlin has submitted a Statement of Interest for this vacancy; this appointment will also be address on September 9, 2019.

A. Event Review

1. Astronomy Event

The Astronomy event was record-breaking for the Committee, in terms of community participation and attendance; the Astronomy Club sent in a kind note thanking the members for holding this event. The positive feedback received will likely result in a similar event taking place in the future.

2. Botanical Walk

The Botanical Walk was also successful, with about 20 community members participating. This event may be rebranded as a Wildflower walk, taking place earlier in the season next year with more coordination with the mowers. A tree was identified that is over 200 years old. Thank you notes were sent to Hall Memorial Library and the botanist who led the walk. Mr. Palshaw introduced the idea of reforestation using walnuts at the Batz Property.

B. Education Subcommittee

The Education Subcommittee discussion was tabled to the October meeting due to absent members.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Safety and Emergency Response Preparedness

A discussion took place on the need for pre-registration for hiking events. CIRMA was pleased with the response to a recent incident and will be sending a representative to walk the trails with the Committee and suggest any improvements.

Members also talked about the best way to mark trails for emergency personnel; the Planning and Development Subcommittee will meet to discuss the use of GPS markers on trees versus "emergency access points" known to emergency personnel.

Chairman Desrocher requested that the HRC blaze the Windermere Trail, and if they are unable to complete this by the end of the season, the Trails Committee will step in to assist. Pam McCormick suggested making the trail two different colors to help avoid confusion.

Committee members must continue to familiarize themselves with all existing Town trails and will be assigned a role in case of emergency at each event so that the response is swift and efficient. Mr. Palshaw suggested that after every hike, someone should do a final sweep to make sure no one is left on the trail. Ms. Anderson said that a list of emergency contacts and phone numbers for the Committee members should be available and should be saved in the other members' phones, which should be kept accessible at each event. A first aid kit will also be brought to every event. This discussion may be continued during the October meeting.

B. Windermere Trail Safety Improvements

Mr. Palshaw spoke of the metal tubes on the trail which needed attention. Public Works has cut down the pipe and the sharp edges have been filed; another piece of piping was identified and it was noticed that the ramp is not level with the walkway; this will be leveled with woodchips by the HRC.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. Treasurer: Lois Timms-Ferrara stated that expenditures at this time are close to \$500. Chairman Desrocher brought up a discussion about ordering wooden signs for Robert Tedford Memorial Park and the Windermere trail; this will be discussed in more detail in October.

B. Planning & Development: Ms. Anderson has seven individuals signed up for the Big Y community service project to build bridges and clear a new trail at Kimball Forest on September 10. New maps and a new Kimball brochure will need to be created after the final GPS plotting is complete. Eagle Scout Ben Lipton is taking on a composting project in the Children's Garden at the Batz Property. Judi Manfre is also collecting nature books to add to the Little Free Library that Decide to Be Kind will be installing in that area.

C. Maintenance: Valerie Amsel discussed the bridge-building project that Big Y was going to be involved with; Mr. Palshaw suggested using Trex as bridge railings as it doesn't leave splinters and offers good support.

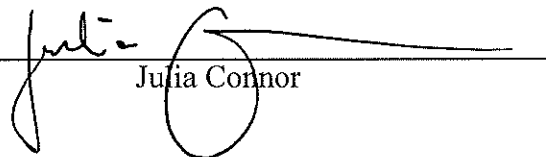
D. Community Outreach: Ms. Anderson spoke about the upcoming Fungus Walk and stated that she'll need two or three additional people to attend. Ms. Amsel and Mrs. Manfre volunteered. It was suggested that attendees bring fungus samples from home, and a plan for a similar event next year is already in the works.

E. Trail of Treats: Applications from businesses and groups are coming in; 25 have been received so far. LED lights have been ordered; Ellington Volunteer Fire Department has individuals trained to direct parking but if they are unavailable, Vernon/Enfield Explorer groups may be able to assist. September 13 is the deadline for applications. A logistics meeting is scheduled for September 25 in the Town Hall Annex. 150 pumpkins are being planned on for this year; discussions with Dzen Garden Market are still taking place. The Committee may need to start putting up snow-fencing and stakes on Sunday, October 27. Vendors must be present for set-up by 4:30 pm on October 28 in order to be approved by the Fire Marshal.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (TIMMS-FERRARA) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:46 PM.

Submitted by



Julia Connor