

Forest Committee Meeting Minutes

December 29, 2020

Present:

Chris Fish-TFC Member, Stephanie Stanton-TFC Member, Orlando Pacheco-Town Administrator, David Koonce-Conservation Agent, Tim Castner, Frank Streeter.

Call to Order

Mr. Fish called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.

LAND Grant

Mr. Pacheco provided an update on the AUC open space acquisition. The preliminary deed has been sent to KP LAW for review from AUC's counsel. Some language will need to be adjusted to reflect language that is required for the Grant. The title work has already been ordered and the check has been cut, but not released by the Town until the deed language is complete and agreed to by both parties.

Mr. Koonce has sent Mr. Pacheco a template for the signage which will also need approval from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEA)

The title work and deed should be ready in 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Koonce in reviewing that documents stated that the baseline documentation report and land management plan. Mr. Pacheco stated that he communicated with Nathaniel at EOEA and the Forest Management Plan, if included might be sufficient.

Also noted was the contract date being pushed out to June 30, 2022 which would limit the timeframe for reimbursement for the Town. Mr. Pacheco stated that he would follow up with EOEA on both issues and report back to the committee.

Forest Management Plan

The new Forest Management Plan was sent to the Committee on 12/24/2020. Mr. Pacheco suggested that we look at incorporating the new parcel in the management plan. No cost was unknown but we could reach out to the Forrester, Kevin Sher, for an estimate.

Mr. Koonce requested that a portion of the forest be set aside for old growth characteristics in the Northwest section of the forest. Mr. Pacheco stated that he thought that was addressed in blue within the plan. Mr. Fish also noted that it had been previously decided not to cut in the east lot. The Hemlock Trees are diseased and the treatments for them are expensive with no guarantee of success. Mr. Streeter suggested that he has had some success with giving the trees more space and water.

Mr. Koonce noted that in Stand 18 and area was designated "Old Growth Management Area". Mr. Koonce also suggested that we prioritize the certification of more vernal pools in the forest. Mr. Koonce and Mr. Pacheco would discuss trying to fund the vernal pool certification in the capital plan.

Mr. Castner joined the meeting and stated that there was no real cost-effective way to treat the Hemlocks. Mr. Koonce stated that focus should be to focus on a few healthy trees just to preserve them from not dying off.

Ms. Stanton discussed that some of the large trees in the forest had fallen and we should reach out to DPW about assisting in keeping the trails clear. Mr. Koonce also requested that it would be easier to for him if meetings were at 6pm so as not to conflict with

The next Forest Committee Meeting will be January 26, 2021 at 6pm via Zoom.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm