

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2015
6:30 PM AT THE LIBRARY

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Eric Nuse, Noel Dodge, Ann Marie Bahr
Absent: Louise von Weise
Guests: Lydia Menendez, Nick Prechel

The March minutes were approved.

UPDATE ON THE JOURNEY'S END TRAIL PROJECT

Lydia Menendez from the Vermont River Conservancy and Nick Prechel from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, updated us on plans for the work to be done on the trail. The grant has been "signed, sealed, and delivered", according to Lydia, and the VYCC's work is set to begin on June 22 and will continue for three weeks. The crew will need a place to camp while here. Eric offered to check to use his daughter Kyle's land on Plot Rd.

Before the VYCC begin, Nick will flag the proposed trail and members of CC will trim brush out three feet on each side of it. We'll also clear out low hanging branches (up to 8' high) and downed logs, etc., that are in the way. The finished trail will be 24" to 36" wide. Nick will email Lois and Eric when the trail has been marked and will send plans for a kiosk. We'll also move the picnic table.

The CC needs to prioritize what they want the VYCC to do; as much work as the money allows will be done. We named the bridge as important, opting to build that rather than use stepping stones.

Lydia will talk to the VRC's Noah Pollack about moldering toilets and where we might put one at JE.

VYCC will not do signage. Lois has some interpretive signage from LANDS that we can laminate and use. Lydia will print and laminate a sign for the kiosk listing the donors who contributed to the Journey's End fund.

It may be possible to get Teen Challenge to do some of the heavy work such as digging holes for kiosk posts and hauling in materials; Eric will look into that. The more work we can get done, the more the VYCC can get built.

We need to make sure we log all hours spent on work, starting from February 24, 2015, when the grant was signed. We'll need the hours, as well as the value of donated materials, for the in-kind match of \$5238. Time spent in discussion at meetings counts toward it as well. Lydia will send a sheet for recording volunteer hours.

The town seems to have some hesitation cementing the agreement with the Callahan's regarding crossing their land. Lydia will call the Selectboard. Lois will look into possible liability issues and will try to get it onto the Selectboard's May agenda.

It would be nice to celebrate the opening of the new trail, either in June or in August, when the college students return.

BEARD'S SWIMMING HOLE

The Vermont River Conservancy has submitted two grants for the acquisition of the swimming hole and will know if they fly in early May.

MARCH GLADNESS-IT'S A WRAP

Judging by the turnouts and feedback from the public, they were a very successful. We'll do it again next year.

KIOSKS

We'll head up to Eden soon to cut cedar for the posts and Eric will coordinate with Laraway's Cal Stanton re: the building of the kiosks.

KNOTWEED REVISITED

The knotweed problem is growing, so Sue has a new idea: let's get a group of goats to eat it. Ann Marie will talk to goat-owning friends about doing a trial run of knotweed eradication at Waterman Brook. She suggested we write a tiny grant (which is due on May 15) to get temporary fencing for the project. Sue will write the grant, with Lois' help.

ARBOR DAY

The Tree Board will plant a tree at 3:30 PM on the Library lawn on May 1 and hopes the CC will attend.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Kim Komer of the Lamoille County Conservation District, is supportive of the education and outreach that a regional group of Conservation Commissions could accomplish. She's interested in the fact that this group could speak on watershed issues and have a voice in Montpelier. She and Eric will talk about the next steps necessary to make it happen.

Nothing has been heard from Jens.

MISC:

- ~ Nick mentioned the possibility of getting grants through VTrans for connector trail work like that at Gomo.
- ~ Sue tested the CC's mettle with her cooking. They were intrepid and ate her blueberry crumble.
- ~ The summer meetings will be Thursday, July 16 and Thursday, August 20.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 19, at the Library at 6:30 PM.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.