JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MARCH 17, 2015 6:30 AT THE LIBRARY

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Eric Nuse, Noel Dodge, Louise von Weise

Absent: Ann Marie Bahr

The February minutes were approved.

ANOTHER MEMBER HITS THE HAPPY TRAIL

Carley Coolidge has resigned, effective immediately. Carley was a founding member of the CC and gave ten years of appreciated service.

JOURNEY’S END TRAIL WORK

Lydia Menendez has informed Lois that we have a choice of timeframes for the work to be done by the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. We chose mid-late June. Prior to their starting, we’ll need to get brush cut from the present trail. Eric felt that a half day with a small crew should be sufficient. As well, the picnic table will be moved to higher ground. Simple signage will be hung on the trail in the spring. At some time in the near future, we will address the knotweed problem on the brook.

We were all astonished to discover that there is no mention of the bridge in the VYCC’s plan. It would appear that it is our extensive and expensive baby.

Lois will invite Lydia and someone from the VYCC to attend our next meeting so we can clarify details.

IN-KIND VOLUNTEER HOURS

It’s important that we record all hours spent on the trail work after April 1, because the grant requires in-kind donated time.

KIOSKS

Eric has spoken with Cal Stanton at Laraway about building us three kiosks for Journey’s End, Prindle, and Gomo. They can provide labor and some of the building material and Sue can donate cedar from her land for the uprights. Cedar shakes and plywood can come from the budget. We may ask Teen Challenge to install them, as Laraway can’t do that. We’ll form a crew and cut the cedar in the spring.

What to put on the kiosks? Maps and a log book similar to those kept on the Long Trail would be good. Louise offered to keep the log book fresh and full of paper. Educational texts on wildlife, plants, and trees are good idea. The Journey’s End kiosk should carry a list of donors and the story of its conservation.

TRACKING SURVEY

Nothing is new since our last meeting, due to the fact that it’s been a tough winter for tracking. Eric has decided to change the focus of the survey from Route 15 and the Rail Trail to tapping into local knowledge as to where the wildlife traffic is, keeping it on a smaller scale.

GREEN UP DAY

Jen Stefanski will chair it again. **A motion was passed to give $100 toward Green Up Day this year.**

PROGRAM PLANNING

March marks the tenth anniversary of the CC. We’ll make plans for a celebratory event at the next meeting. Meanwhile, it’s been suggested that we ought to get a band at TNL to sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to us. It’s the least we deserve!

Louise and Sue think we should have a float in the Memorial Day parade. Louise proposed that we put a kiosk on a float- what a great idea!

‘MARCH GLADNESS’ IS A SUCCESS!

Sue’s talk on gardening drew 17 people who seemed to enjoy themselves. (Nobody fell asleep.) Next up is Eric’s talk on sub-zero camping, a sure winner. Noel will end the series on the 28th with his Bobcats in the Back Yard.

REGIONAL MEETING FOR AREA CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS

Lois has not yet heard from Lamoille County Planning Commission’s Taylar Foster about this idea. Eric spoke with Kim Komer, who offered to coordinate a Lamoille watershed grouping. He’ll follow up with her and tell her we’d like to move it forward.

(Note- On March 20, Lois received a note from Jens Hilke offering to set up a meeting in May.) So things are moving ahead and we will think about a presentation.

PADDLER’S TRAIL UPDATE

Interest remains lively; 30+ people attended an informative meeting in Hardwick, including a member of the Wolcott Select Board. Fairfax also wants to get involved. The group has obtained a third grant.

They’re first steps will be signage and improvement of access areas. Mapping and getting permission from landowners for campsites will follow.

GOMO AND VASA

Once the snow goes, (if it ever goes), VASA’s Dave Hardy will probably want to walk Gomo to assess conditions. We’ll plan to do apple tree release in the spring and work on the loop trail.

LANDS

Keep in mind that short projects will be sought by the LANDS students. Let’s come up with some interesting projects. Noel suggested having them do an aquatic survey at Journey’s End. A nature trail at Journey’s End is a possibility, as is a study of the silted mouth of Foote Brook where it enters the Lamoille.

MISC:

~ In one really crazy move, Noel decide to get that chocolate covered English Toffee out of his house. Fortunately, he knew we’d eat it for him. Ditto for Eric’s cinnamon cookies. Thanks!

~There are no flies on the Johnson Conservation Commission. Just an observation.

Adjourned at 8:30 PM. The next meeting is on April 21 at 6:30 at the Johnson Public Library.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.