

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 14, 2021

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Dean Locke, Noel Dodge, Denise Ashman, Jared Jasinski,
Peter Hammond, Carrie Watson
Absent: Jackie Stanton

The September minutes were approved.
Added to the agenda: McCuin's Island

GOMO

Greg Fatigate brushhogged the four fields at Gomo on October 11, which included some chainsawing and stacking of brush. Though he hogged the interior of the foundation, he didn't do all that has been done in the past. There are thick saplings at the bottom of the field where we had the 10th anniversary celebration. Greg suggested we have him do it again next year but the management plan says to cut every third year. The bill was \$780.

Lois, Peter, Dean, and Russell, who guided the way with his compass, walked the site to assess the job and pronounced it well done.

JOURNEY'S END BRIDGE

Jared looked at the railing and feels that it's falling apart and needs a complete replacement. Only 2 bolts held each post in place. Dean and Peter will send Lois pictures of the failed railing for her files, then take it down on October 15. We'll rebuild when the opportunity arises. Noel has cedar for the rails and Noel and Lois have leftover bolts from Journey's End.

GOMO KIOSK

Dean and Jared will reschedule delivering the kiosk components to Gomo. Norm Larow, the 'Ambassador to the Gomo Town Forest', will take them to the site.

Screws and bolts are needed to install it.

BUDGET 2022-3

It's due by November 1. Traditionally the allocation is \$1500; our balance is currently 4019.17, not including the reserve fund. We should spend down that amount for projects. Lois handed out copies of the proposed budget of \$2050, which requests that our balance above the budgeted total be moved to the Conservation Reserve Fund. Everyone agreed with the budget proposal and request.

Jared suggested hiring people to identify problem areas by doing testing/surveying for things like erosion or pollution. Lois recommended grant writing as more appropriate for those sorts of things.

Lois proposed paying for an inventory of McCuin Island's plants and resources and using some funds to learn how to write a Recreation Management Plan.

Sue suggested hiring experts for presentations for March Gladness and beyond.

Last year we spent \$7,826.47, which included a \$5000 donation toward the handicapped access trail at Beard's.

EAB UPDATE

There is still no word about the videos.

McCUIN'S ISLAND

Presently the Paddler's Trail map shows McCuin's with two campsites and a capacity of twelve people, which we find unacceptable. We have been waiting three years for a change. (See October, 2018 minutes) Two years ago the state told Noel that they wish to do another site visit (on top of Eric Sorenson's survey) but have never followed up. It's time to make some noise in defense of McCuin's and its fragility; it is one of the few remaining untouched places on the river. Noel has two letters from state officials that outline its sensitivity and the rarity of one of its plants. They make a case for leaving the island alone. He will send copies to someone who can change the situation.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

A motion was made and unanimously passed to create a Recreation Management Plan. We began the discussion with a few pertinent points:

- We can incorporate information from the Natural Resources Inventory and the Community Values Project.
- We should push the town to do the new website, which would give us a place to present information.
- We need to build awareness in the community and share information, making people aware of our strategy and actions.
- We can hire people to do programs.
- We need to demand respect, which we and the environment have not gotten all too frequently in the past. Lois suggested meeting with the selectboard after the first of the year to say there are problems and explain them.

Sue asked everyone to consider conservation vs. preservation for the next meeting.

We'll resume discussion at the November meeting.

MISC

- Greg Fatigate reported a good deal of bear activity in the apple trees.
- Dean proposed that everyone has contact numbers for each member; the group agreed. Lois will send them out.
- There has been no more response about the Beard's Brouhaha, aka the Mowdown Showdown.

Adjourned at 8:47.

Next meeting is on Thursday, November 11, at 6:30 at the municipal building.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.