

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 9, 2023

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Dean Locke, Noel Dodge, Peter Hammond, Jackie Stanton (arrived at 7:30)

Absent: Aurora River, Denise Ashman, Jared Jasinski

The October minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lois received a printout for the fiscal year, but there are questions about a non-itemized purchase totaling 99.98 that will have to be cleared up.

VERMONT RIVER CONSERVANCY WORK AT JOURNEY'S END

After having visited Journey's End to look at the problems/solutions suggested by the VRC, we voted to muck onto their entire list, including the bridge that we'd previously doubted. We also voted to increase the amount we'll spend to \$999. Lois will ask Remy to establish a timeline.

Since several people have expressed an interest in having a picnic table there, we revised our thinking about replacing the ruined table. We'll provide a new one but will anchor it on the flat area from whence the old one was removed so many times. As well, we agreed to remove the firepit for the sake of easier maintenance and less trash.

'24-'25 BUDGET

The Selectboard has requested that all groups cut 5% from the upcoming budget requests, and to ask for no increase in '25-'26. This won't be a problem for us, as we can cut the \$150 equipment request, which is more than 5%.

Materials on hand include a beam for a bat house (at Noel's), screws and lag bolts (at Dean's), and an unspecified amount of plywood (at Jared's). Peter paid for the post he installed at Beard's last month. Needed will be six posts and railing to replace the rest of the Beard's railing; it should run about \$100.

It was agreed that we should be promoting the reserve fund. We should get a group together who will back a penny or half penny on a hundred in the grand list so we and they can eventually present it to the Selectboard.

LAND MANAGEMENT FORM FOR THE ARBORETUM

Sue produced a letter from Chris Brunelle, the area's River Management Engineer, stating that no permit is needed for a bridge. A unanimous vote to approve the bridge, which will be 14' long, was passed.

FUN, GAMES, AND COMPUTER PROBLEMS

For some inscrutable reason, the town CC email address is not functioning. Peter, Lois, and the town's tech folks couldn't straighten it out, despite a serious effort. When it is up and running again, Peter will be the new administrator.

POLLINATOR PROJECT

Mowing is done for the season and the "final install", according to Bee the Change, will be in the spring. The fourth patch on the end toward rt 15 was never done, so it was decided that we'll leave it alone and it will become a pollinator patch all by itself. There are many native wildflowers in the grass there.

GOMO KIOSK

In October we talked about asking VASA to install the kiosk but no one was designated to do it.

VASA should be signing the agreement between them and the town yearly; it's not known whether they're actually doing it. Dean remembers them signing last year. He will contact VASA Trail coordinator Ethan Hill about that and the kiosk. We should ascertain the date of the signing and inform Tom Galinat about it.

BEARD'S RECREATION UPDATE

The picnic table is in place and Dean will attach a padlock to the anchor chain. Peter will handle the new posts and rail on the stairway in the spring.

BAT VIDEO

No news yet.

AUDUBON PRINTS

Lois had one of the big prints appraised. It happens to have advertising on it, which increases its' value, which is \$100-\$150. The others are anyone's guess. Several suggestions were made and it was finally decided to find a local dealer who might be able to do it. Peter offered to take them, but at a later time.

DECEMBER MEETING

It will start at 6:30 and it will be a finger food potluck. Lois will bring hot cider, Noel will make Swedish Meatballs, and Sue did everybody a favor by promising not to cook, but to buy something. No one else made a decision, though all agreed that everyone will bring something. Our new town administrator Tom Galinat will attend.

MISC

- Despite the rumor going around that 45 flood damaged houses are slated to be bought out by FEMA, the actual number is 3 or 4. None of those has completed the process for FEMA to make a decision yet.
- We discussed planting trees in those eventual green spaces for flood resiliency when the opportunities might exist.

Adjourned at 8:52.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.

The next meeting is on Thursday, December 14, at the Library at the Masonic Temple at 6:30.