

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 19, 2024

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Peter Hammond, Noel Dodge, Dean Locke, Adrian Schmidt.
Absent: Jackie Stanton, Johna Keefe, Jared Jasinski

The November minutes were approved. Noel added the Christmas Bird Count to the agenda.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dean reports that he has no bank balance from Rosemary, due to the internet and phones being down at the Municipal Building this afternoon. You call that an excuse, Dean??

However, according to Lois, we know that the ending fiscal year balance in June was 2850.89 and that we're thought to have 2549. to hold us until June, 2025. The conservation reserve fund has 5500.

Dean has not billed for the two pairs of bench anchors he bought. He'll donate them instead. Ideas mentioned in a 'what should we spend it on' discussion began with: How can we grow the reserve fund so we can use it for conserving land? Also discussed were hiring speakers, mowing at Wescom, riparian education, putting money toward a Gomo management plan, replacing the railing at Beard's, publishing a brochure that explains what we do, and publishing one explaining the process of developing anything on public land, aka using the land management form.

Lois plans to speak to administrator Tom Galinat about adding Wescom to the town's mowing roster. Peter offered to estimate the cost of a new railing at Beard's. We may be able to find a volunteer to install it, along with a fence along the road.

ANNUAL REPORT

Lois asked for input about the annual report and had no response, she wrote her usual great report without any help. She does, however, need pictures from Noel and Peter of the last apple tree release at Gomo.

GOMO AND ATVS, REVISITED

The ATV club hasn't signed their annual registration requirement. Noel suggested that we should add a clause to the document saying that the penalty for non-registration will be closure of the trail. Guaranteed to make them pay attention.

We need to find out who the person is to contact about it.

Coincidentally, and perhaps wishful thinking, someone has put up a 'No ATVs' sign at Gomo.

GOMO MANAGEMENT PLAN

It turns out that Mike Green was not planning to produce a management plan. He suggested a logger but there has been no timber cruise from a forester. We haven't paid Mike and there is no contract. We need to check with Mike about going forward with a management plan and a timber plan.

Two of the boundaries are not identified at Gomo. Peter brought up surveying the property to the selectboard, who were somewhat receptive to the idea and asked for costs. Peter will talk to three well known surveyors for estimates.

We ought to look into conserving Gomo. That would mean contacting the Trust for Public Land.

CC AND SELF-PROMOTION

It's hard to believe, but many people do not know who we are and what we do after 18 years of work. We should tell them. We all feel that two brochures are a good idea and can explain how we can help the community with environmental, conservation, wildlife, etc. issues, and also with development processes on town properties. In fact, we are a wonderful, educated resource with much knowledge about the natural world and we're free!

Dean will draft some ideas for brochures for the January meeting.

CONTACT LIST UPDATE

It's not up and not running.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

*January 11 snowshoe trek at the Talc property. Meet at 10:00 AM at the Food Shelf parking area.

*On January 19, Ethan Tapper will talk about his book 'How to Love a Forest' at Jenna's House at 2 PM with set-up at 1:00. This is presented in collaboration with the library.

AUDUBON PRINTS, REDUX

Yup, they're still in Lois' guest room. Sue suggested we get a table at the February 17 WOKO flea market at the Essex Expo Center; it only costs \$30. Everybody liked that. Sue will get the forms and info. Noel offered to help out at the market. It'll be fun. And what do you know, the Chinese Buffet is right down the road. The sale runs from 8:30-2:00.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Annette Kalinoski has offered to organize the CBC this year. Noel is unable to do it. It will be on January 3 and will include feeder counts. At least 12 people need to step up. The Stowe contingent will not participate. Anyone on Noel's list will get an email from Annette.

MISC

- It's illegal to drag logs on a town road.
- Adrian volunteered to attend the Reimagine Recreation Economy committee meetings as our liaison.
- Here's a brain-twister: how to measure the negative effects on climate change of driving for a bird count against the good that can be done for birds with the accrued information by the Audubon Society, among others?
- It's a Stowe thing.

Adjourned at 8:45.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary

Next meeting at the library at 6:30 on January 9, 2025.