



City of Keene, New Hampshire

Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee

Thursday, July 8, 2021

8:30 AM

2nd floor Conference Room, City Hall

Subcommittee Members

Members Present:

Thomas P. Haynes, Chair
Art Walker
Steven Bill

Members Not Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks & Rec Director

Staff Present:

Rhett Lamb, Community Development
Director/ACM
Corinne Marcou, Administrative Assist.

Chair Haynes opened up the meeting to introduce guests. Mr. Davern, President of Brattleboro-Keene New England Mountain Bike Association (BK-NEMBA), introduced themselves.

1. Meeting Schedule

8:30 am timeframe 2nd Thursday of each month 8/12/21. Corinne Marcou to send email reminders.

2. Membership

Chair Haynes stated that the subcommittee is looking for a community person who is an active Goose Pond participant. Chair Haynes asked Mr. Lamb if there were any leads on abutters to add to the committee. Mr. Lamb stated that he will call Kate Bosely, City Councilor, to get recommendations and also look at the previous committee's membership for contacts to make to add to member seats. Chair Haynes stated that the subcommittee is trying to keep the member numbers as small as possible but to keep a well-established list of adjunct members for contact on things such as biology or trail work. Mr. Davern asked about trail boundaries and if we would need a professional surveyor. Mr. Lamb said that it's a surveyor's specialty and task to mark boundaries. Chair Haynes states that it would be better to utilize a surveyor at boundary and trail crossings due to expense.

3. Discussion Items

a. Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Plan priorities

Mr. Lamb provided the members with a summary of the larger Stewardship Plan. Mr. Bill presented the group with a chart listing some goals from the larger plan to help the subcommittee prioritize and educate the public. The chart will be turned into an Excel working document and shared with the members. Volunteers, it was agreed, will be a huge part of this project as mentioned by Mr. Davern, as well as utilizing this as a general educational tool as outlined in the Stewardship Plan. Chair Haynes referred back to the Stewardship Plan to discuss long term action items in community outreach and education and said without creating a whole other subcommittee collaborating with the Conservation Committee to gather volunteers, from possibly the local schools and Keene State College, to gather data in, for instance, water quality. Mr. Davern suggested hosting monthly walks which Chair Haynes said there are quarterly walks lined up to start around Goose Pond. Chair Haynes suggested that using kiosks to educate and inform the community about changes or findings at Goose pond and said he is open to doing more nature walks throughout Goose Pond. Mr. Lamb asked how we could get the word out about nature

walks and if they are well attended. Mr. Walker said in the past, the nature walks he has been to have been well attended. Mr. Lamb asked if having a nature walk is the best way to go about educating the community. Chair Haynes said that this could be addressed with the Conservation Committee. Mr. Lamb suggested we could get Keene State students or Keene High School students involved in the scientific aspects of the project, document trends and have people get more interested over time. Mr. Walker suggested contacting the Boy Scouts or Eagle Scouts for volunteers as well as local ecology clubs. Chair Haynes suggested using technology to connect community members to be citizen scientists and take photos and upload them to a website or blog. Mr. Bill suggested using geocaching to get the community involved as well. Mr. Davern said that this summer BK-NEMBA was awarded trail counters to collect data to better serve its community and the trail counters could also be used around Good Pond.

Chair Haynes stated that signage is another large part of the Stewardship plan on page 63. Chair Haynes continued by asking the committee what they could do to make the signage more uniformed. Mr. Walker said that in Massachusetts State Parks is they number the trail intersections but many of their signs are 15 feet off the ground. Mr. Walker continued saying that the committee could ask the Keene High School shop classes to make some wooden signs or use a type of plastic sign. Mr. Davern said that he uses members from BK-NEMBA to make signs and commented that in the past they had struggled with sign vandalism but haven't had any issues recently with the new plastic signs with marker written on them. Mr. Davern said that those cheaper signs don't have any collector's value and are cheap to replace. Mr. Davern continued saying they used grant money to buy materials and make the signs and that he could assist in finding grant money for the committee to make new signs. Mr. Bill said that a kiosk and sign project could be done in stages and it could be as simple as painting trees. Chair Haynes said that after data has been collected on trail usage the committee could discuss grant funding for signs and kiosks. Mr. Lamb said that would be a topic for Mr. Bohannon, Parks & Rec Director, to comment on once he can start attending the meetings. Mr. Davern said that he had another meeting to attend but expressed interest in BK-NEMBA and himself being part of the subcommittee. Chair Haynes asked if the BK-NEMBA organization could be a member and not just one specific person. Mr. Lamb said to his knowledge that has never been done before. Mr. Davern said that he would most likely be the one representing BK-NEMBA at future meetings and confirmed that the meeting time and date works well for him. Mr. Davern left the meeting.

Mr. Lamb added that at the next meeting the subcommittee might benefit from staying focused on one task or subject at a time for discussion and planning. Mr. Lamb also said that in regards to keeping things organized, maybe each member picks their top priorities or top 5 priorities and hearing from Mr. Bohannon is crucial for this staying organized as well. Once we collaborate more with Mr. Bohannon, we can start to reach out to volunteers to start on the forestry type of work mentioned in the Stewardship Plan. Chair Haynes said that the forest management and more physical aspects of making trails and such are more in the background as the subcommittee creates the stage for education and avoid damage to the habitat, animal life and community conflict as much as possible with the changes to Goose Pond. Chair Haynes said that collecting the data is crucial to work off of something. Mr. Bill said that he likes the idea used in National Parks, which is to minimize our interventions and let nature do its thing. Chair Haynes said we could create a preserve part of Goose Pond to let it go. Mr. Lamb said that an ecological reserve is part of the Stewardship Plan. Mr. Lamb suggested that the subcommittee walks around Goose Pond with Jeff Littleton and Swift Corwin to learn and have fun out there. Chair Haynes said he had reached out to Jeff Littleton a few weeks ago and hasn't heard back. Mr. Bill asked who would do this type of work free. Chair Haynes asked Mr. Lamb about a bigger budget. Mr. Lamb said the subcommittee could use some of the Conservation Committee money but a lot of this goes through Mr. Bohannon and we could also ask the City Council for approval on a budget. Chair Haynes asked, if we get \$25,000 that goes into the land use change tax fund, is it possible to put \$2,000 into an educational and outreach portion. Mr. Lamb said it could be possible but the fund would have to be examined. Mr. Bill said we could do a fundraiser at the pond. Chair Haynes said that one of the recommendations from the Stewardship Plan suggested creating an endowment fund that stays with the pond and that timber harvesting has been suggested as one method of generating revenue but that might not be the best way to go to preserve older trees. Chair Haynes said that the goal is to create a self-sufficient model with Goose Pond and asked the members to come up with 5 topics each of them feels strongly about, bring them to the next meeting and go from there.

4. Adjournment – Adjourned at 9:35am