

Ashley Community Forest Board - Regular Meeting Agenda

Thursday 9-14-23, 6:00 p.m.

Sharon Academy High School, Sharon, Vermont

Attendance: David Paganelli, Judith Faulk, Erik Skarsten, Annie Penfield, Rob Stainton.

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comments - none.

3. Approve Minutes from 7-13-23 meeting. Postponed. Not enough members to vote.
No August Meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report – Annie: We have spent no money. The Town Clerk has been emailed about moving the money into a CD. No response from the Town Clerk and Annie will follow up.

5. Fall Programming – Annie - Paul Kristensen can do the stone wall talk. There is interest, especially due to the foundation. Annie will schedule.

6. Report on 2023 Invasive Plant Work Days - David - we had five work days. 8 or 10 people at most. A total of 26 different people came over the 5 different days. All the work made an impact on the Japanese Barberry. About half the area of Japanese Barberry was completed. Annie is going to send out thankyou notes.

7. Discuss recent interaction with Deb Fisk with respect to trail access and use. Is it time to get a legal opinion on our Sharon access? - Erik - Brief interaction with Deb Fisk who is interested in working with the ACF board to open the Clifford Rd access. David suggests that the next budget should include a line item for a legal opinion for the Sharon access.

8. Report on June 4th program with Emily Boles and Rudi Rudell. 9 people in attendance. Report on June 21st program with Becky Bailey. 14 people in attendance. Attendance in general was good for the number of programs. A wet summer limited the number of programs.

10. Report on Black Locust Project.

The last time we had a formal meeting, Mike Hebb had requested to harvest black locust from scraps left over after logging for kiosks but found the pieces not suitable for the project. Frost Damage was devastating but did rebound this season. Jim Welch interested in harvesting Black Locust for a timber sale.

An email from Michael Sacca outlines the plan “The other thing is the potential locust harvest and some figures that were agreed upon. The July ACF meeting that took place at the ACF with Annie, David and myself in attendance came up with a plan to remove up to 60% of locust trees over a 10” dbh and to leave the remaining trees. From the meeting notes/minutes of 7/13/23: “We walked past the foundation up the hill to the Sharon/upper field and discussed the locust harvest. Jim Welch would harvest with the wood going to Timber Homes. They are willing to pay

\$100/1000ft (check figures). *Should read \$1000/1000ft* It was decided that anything straight, over 10" dbh would be cut and anything smaller would stay, up to 60% of the locust stand. The exceptions are the trees nearer the foundation. Some large ones would go, others would stay." Annie made a motion for David to draw up a contract for the Black Locust Harvest for the logging outlined above. Seconded by Erik. Unanimous.

Kiosk options.

Email from Michael Sacca "Kiosk construction: A couple of months back I mentioned that through AVC and a grant from the Davis Foundation, there is about 4k available for the construction of a kiosk. This money is only available through the end of 2023 then it evaporates. I offered to be part of a kiosk sub group but don't think there was much follow up to the proposition. At that time I mentioned two potential kiosk makers- Jeff Porter and my son Mario, both of Tunbridge. Jeff built one for the town of Tunbridge and can even be seen next to the Post Office. Mario worked for Timber Homes of Vershire and used to build kiosks for the company. He also made 2 one post kiosks for both ends of the Manning Farm Trail that will be installed next week. I would recommend that we get in this very soon to ensure that the work is completed but not necessarily installed by year end." David made a motion to authorize Michael to draft a design for a two post kiosk, reviewed by the board. Then request that Jeff and Mario submit a bid for the project not to exceed \$4,000. Subject to the grant from the Davis Foundation. Annie seconded. Unanimous.

Note for budget: Using an excavator to put in the posts will be the most efficient. There is a need to block illegal motorized access, to expand the parking area, add water bars and set gate posts. These can be done at the same time. David P proposes that Annie amend the budget to reflect discussions about these items from the FY2024 budget. Seconded by Rob. Unanimous.

11. Report on discussions with Strafford Selectboard and Road Foreman. About road damage from the storm this summer. No current action from the ACF board.

12. Report on 2023 mowing. Sean Ward used Annie's tractor to mow the Sharon opening in August. Did a great job. Annie donated the money for the mowing. Next year the Strafford opening will be mowed.

13. Work plan for 2024.

Gate - Permission was granted to put a gate up at the end of Nutting Rd to prevent illegal motorized access. Budget for a farm gate as proposed by Annie Pennfield. Seconded by David Paganelli. Unanimous.

- No Motorized Vehicle sign. Annie made a motion for two signs. Seconded by Rob. Unanimous.

- Kiosk,
- Stones,
- Parking Area Expansion and smooth ditch,
- Trail erosion,
- Trail work.

14. Other Business.

- FY25 Appropriations Requests:
Due Date: Monday, November 6th, 2023
- Note: Town of Sharon FY2023 Annual Report/Budget Submittals
Due Date: Thursday, December 21st, 2023
 - Andrew Sample request for hunting permission granted . David made a motion. Seconded by Annie. Unanimous.

7:37 Adjourn

Next meeting. 10-12-23 at Sharon Academy High School, Sharon, Vermont

Draft minutes respectively submitted by R. Stainton on 9/14/23