

Ashley Community Forest Board - Regular Meeting Agenda

Thursday 11-9-23, 6:00 p.m.

Sharon Academy High School, Sharon, Vermont

1. Call to Order - 6:05 PM In attendance: David Paganelli , Erik Skarsten Michael Sacca
Rob Stainton Judith Faulk, Kevin Gish
2. Public Comments.
 - a. None
3. Approve Minutes from 9-14-23 meeting.
 - a.
4. Treasurer's Report – Annie
 - a. The Board has spent no money so far this year and the balance sheet looks good.
5. Annual Programming Report: 2023 Educational/Social/Work events - Annie
 - a. Schools - could they have a more organized educational program? Erik has done a little with the Elementary School. The Sharon Elementary School is using the woods but it is not known what is happening in with these programs. Some stones in the foundation have been moved, which potentially could lead to a problem. There needs to be communication and a reminder about the expectations for using the forest. Erik will contact Keenan with this information. Conversation around students building shelters from natural materials. Leave no trace is the general rule. Michael will write a letter to be reviewed by the Board to be sent to the schools using the forest for educational experiences.
 - b. Programming has fallen away a little this year, mostly due to the rain, and do we need to make sure that we keep the forest in communities per vue. Ashley is a good conection to the agricultural past that is in important part of the areas history. Judith noted that if the history of the area is to be highlighted then it should include the indigenous perspective. Can we expand the programming to other groups?
6. Discussion: Is it time to get a legal opinion on our Sharon access?
 - a. Is there a demand? Invasive species work has largely been undertaken from the Sharon “access.” Is the right of way that we think exists valid? The Deed of the owner of the land that the trail crosses states that there is a right of way for access for the original owner of the land that is now owned by Ashley Community Forest. The trail starts from the Class 4 road that accesses that area where the private landowners pay for maintenance of that road. David proposes that we look for the opinion of an attorney to determine whether the Forest land has a right of way across private land. Motion to seek a legal opinion to see if the ACF has a legal right of way. Motion passed. Needs a minor budget change, which will need to be approved at a Sharon and Strafford select board meeting.

7. Report on Black Locust Project

- a. Update: Jim Welch is still interested and would like to do it in the late Fall/early winter of this year. Jim is checking on prices, David will write a contract. Check to make sure that the Selectboards do not need to agree to this timber sale.

8. Kiosk project.

- a. Grant provided for the kiosk by the Davis Conservation Foundation. Agreement that we will use Porter in Tunbridge to make the kiosk. Lexan should be used in the kiosk rather than plexiglass. Metal signs will also be produced with left over money.

9. Work plan for 2024.

- Gate,
- No Motorized Vehicle sign,
- Kiosk,
- Stones,
- Parking Area Expansion, Ditch,
- Trail erosion,
- Trail work.

10. Other Business - Michael would like to see the meetings and other programming on the four town list serves.

7:30 Motion to Adjourn -

Next meeting. 12-14-23 at Sharon Academy H.S., Sharon, Vermont.
Approved Minutes respectfully submitted by Rob Stainton