

Ashley Community Forest Board - Regular Meeting Minutes -
Thursday May 9, 2024, 6:00 p.m. ; Sharon Town Office, Sharon, Vermont

Attendance: David Paganelli, Erik Skarsten, Kevin Gish; Virtual: Michael Sacca, Annie Penfield, Judith Falk

1. Call to Order at 6:05 pm
2. Public Comments: None
3. Approve Minutes from 4/11/24 meeting: Move to approve - Erik; Seconded - Annie; Approved.
4. New Board Appointee: Kevin Gish to replace Rob Staintan. “Many thanks to Rob for his years of service on the board.”
5. Update on Invitation to Bid for Parking Area & Drainage Work: There has been limited response and there are currently no bids received. Annie will check with another possible contractor, and David will follow up with two other contractors that have shown interest.
6. Update on Forest Management Activity:
 - a. David flagged a loop trail that branches off of the main loop trail after an assessment walk with Michael and Erik. This new loop trail will be used as a hiking trail in addition to being used as a logging access skidder trail. Special attention to keep the trail above wet areas was taken.
 - b. David and A.J.Follnsbee (Windsor County State Forester) flagged the area to be logged in the central portion of ACF.
 - c. Individual Trees to be harvested as a part of the “Black Locust Harvest” will be marked.
 - d. David and A.J. will advertise a public walk through ACF to view the forest management areas. Following the initial walk, there will be a second public walk during the logging operation to further the public outreach and education. A third public walk will be offered after the management activity is complete.
7. Update on Invasive Plant Work Days: The date of 5/4 had been moved to 5/18 and will be held from 9am to 2pm. We all hope that there will be increased new participation from both Sharon and Strafford residents.
8. Update of ROW Legal Opinion: David has reached our the Strafford & Sharon towns Legal advisors, but a formal written opinion has not been received. Payment to the law office of \$1290.00 has been payed with proceeds from the ACF management fund.
9. Education / Fun Programing for 2024:
 - a. Siler Russ, a sharon resident will lead a nature walk that will be focused on getting younger participation with accompanied parents. Although Siler is a younger individual, he is an avid birder in Windsor county with many

acknowledged first sightings. Trying to schedule the event for late May or early June.

- b. Annie is working on organizing a Queer Ecology Walk; details to follow.
 - c. Summer Solstice / Music in the Forest Event
 - d. INaturalist walk is in the works that may be led by some youth from both Strafford & Sharon; details to follow.
 - e. Horse ride in July led by Annie.
 - f. Fitness in the forest event; details to follow.
 - g. Reading in the Forest event in collaboration with town libraries toward the end of summer / beginning of school, details to follow.
 - h. The calendar of events will be updated with all proposed activities including the Invasive Plant Pulling Events and the Forest Harvest Public Education Walk.
10. Memorial Bench & Outdoor Toilet Update:
- a. The bench will be supported by locust posts harvested from the ACF. Location will be sited this spring during an ACF work day.
 - b. The “porta potty” company that managed the outdoor toilet has changed hands and the new company will clean the current unit. ACF Board, in consult with the Sharon Elementary School has agreed to pay the \$150 / month cost for the months of June, July, and August (David - motion; Erik - seconded). The elementary school has agreed to pay the remaining months.
 - c. Annie and Michael will continue to research future permanent outdoor toilet options. So far example toilets are Pit, Compost, and Vault. Each option offers variations in design. Questions such as future management, environmental, and cost will be answered in the upcoming months.
11. Work Plan & Other:
- a. Signage: “Non-Motorized Visitors Welcome” to be gotten by Michael and will be placed on the soon to be installed gate.
 - b. Kevin will research stone and a culvert for the soon to be installed kiosk.
12. Meeting Adjourned at 7:22pm (Kevin - motion; Erik - seconded)

Next meeting: **6/13/24** at Strafford Town Library, Strafford, Vermont
Draft Minutes respectfully submitted by Erik Skarsten