

Ashley Community Forest (ACF) Board Meeting Notes – 1/9/25

Sharon Town Office, Sharon, VT

In Person Participants: David Paganelli (Chair), Erik Skarsten (ACF board), Kevin Gish (ACF board), Michael Sacca, (ACF board) Jonathan Nedeau (public)

Remote Participants: Annie Penfield (ACF board)

1. Meeting called to order 6:00pm
2. Public Comments: None
3. Approval of minutes: Kevin Gish moved to approve the minutes of 12/12/24, seconded by Erik Skarsten; approved unanimously.

** Due to limited connectivity, Annie Penfield gave a brief financial report at this point.

- To date ACF has received 2 payments from Bob Wilson (logger): \$896.25 + 3230.88
 - The first payment included the logger's deductions for gravel, insurance and equipment movement. All details will include in the ACF ledger.
 - Current checking account balance = \$13,713.27
 - CD = \$21,000+
 - Annie highlighted that our CD is maturing soon and suggested rolling it over to a new CD at the best rate available. David Paganelli motioned to approve a rollover of our current CD into a new CD at the best rate available, to be coordinated with the Strafford Town treasurer (currently holding ACF funds). Seconded by Erik Skarsten; approved unanimously.
4. Report on Black Locust Project:
 - All black locust shipped: ~ 15K bd ft. To date we have only been paid for one load.
 - 3 loads of firewood shipped: ~33 cords
 - 2 loads of ash + other hardwood shipped: ~12K bd ft
 - Appx 6K bd ft of additional hardwood + firewood to be shipped
 - Logger, Bob Wilson, will be complete within a few weeks, weather dependent and will do final cleanup in the spring.
 - Hazard (ash) trees surrounding parking area were cut as part of the harvest.
 - We have held pre-harvest and during-harvest public info events and a post-harvest event will be held late spring or early summer. This will be noticed on the kiosk, as well as other methods.
 - All buyers of the wood harvested are local!
 - Sharon meadow will be messy post harvest. Do we want to remove stumps and eliminate small islands of trees? No decision.
 5. Draft Sign Plan: ACF Board wants a large entrance sign, kiosk sign and trail signs. David proposed some sign designs, and all seemed to agree with his suggestions. All

signs should have same basic format (lettering type, color, etc.). There was consensus about having light colored (white, yellow) routed letters on a dark (possibly stained) background. Kevin Gish offered to do the routing for the trail signs and possibly the kiosk sign; no decision. Discussion of location for entrance sign was lengthy, but not conclusive.

6. Clifford Farm Rd. Access: Erik Skarsten will invite abutting land owner Deb Fisk to our March meeting to discuss access to the Ashley Forest land via a right-of-way through her land. The ACF Board desires to find a solution that is agreeable to both parties and we want to be good neighbors. This access point could also have a chain or gate with a "No Motorized Vehicles" sign like the main entrance on Nutting Rd.
7. Schedule Work Days:
 - Boundary Marking: David Paganelli will schedule and coordinate boundary blazing with other State foresters in the spring. Painting of the blazes will be done by a volunteer crew after blazing is complete. Boundary paint will be red. ACF Board needs to contact all abutters prior to blazing to ensure they agree to blazing.
 - Trail work: ACF will invite Sam Brakely to look at problem areas of the main loop trail and also how we might connect the new logging trail to the existing main loop via a foot path.
 - Invasives: We plan to have some more invasive pulling days during 2025. Nothing scheduled yet.
8. Other Business:
 - Annual Report for Town Reports (Strafford & Sharon): David P. drafted a report, based on last year's report. The rest of the ACF Board will review and offer edits by Mon, 1/13/25 and then David will finalize and send to both Towns by Tue, 1/14/25
 - Programs for 2025:
 1. Michael Sacca offered to host a Full Moon Walk on Mar 14.
 2. Additional, unconfirmed program ideas: Birding, Naturalist Walk, Tree ID Walk, Singing, Wetlands

Adjourn: Erik Skarsten moved to adjourn at 7:30, Kevin Gish seconded and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: 2-13-25, 6:00 p.m. at Morrill Library, Strafford, Vermont