Freeport Conservation Commission - Minutes

Date: 1-12-2021

Time: 6:30pm

Attendees: Ben Shepard, Ryan Burke, Matt McLaughlin, Mark Morrisey, Anna Cudmore, Catherine Carroll, Dan Piltch, John Lowe

Absent: John Stroud

1. Meeting held via Zoom.
2. Catherine Carroll is a new member to the Conservation Commission, welcome!
3. Approve minutes from November Meeting,
   1. Matt McLaughlin made motion to approve,
   2. Anna Cudmore made a second,
   3. Minutes approved unaimously.
4. Property Updates
   1. Florida Lake
      1. Ben Shepard put up a few more directional signs on the trails.
   2. Hedgehog Mountain
      1. New steel sign installed on the top of Hedgehog Mountain,
      2. Dog waste station to be removed because people have abused it by putting in trash,
         1. This has been an annoyance to the nearby transfer station.
   3. Hidden Pond
      1. Public Works damaged the kiosk while sanding the parking lot but made a repair.
      2. Matt McLaughlin to talk to soon to an abutter to see if the trail that was blazed for snowmobiles is a nuisance,
         1. Idea is to fix up the trail to get access to the back property.
         2. Need to plan for the spring to get mulch over to Hidden Pond to fix up the trails so they’re not so wet.
   4. Quarry Woods
      1. Ben Shepard, Ryan Burke, and John Stroud built three bridges at Quarry Woods,
         1. A 4th bridge needs to be put in, but there aren’t enough materials to build it.
      2. Ben Shepard put up a few more directional signs on the trails and established a Blue trail.
      3. Ben Shepard also added a sign in the kiosk acknowledging that Central Maine Power helped with the kiosk (to auger the holes for the kiosk).
   5. Soule Park
      1. In spring, Ryan Burke to work with the French School and the Friends of Soule Park to develop a replanting plan.
5. Ordinance Discussion
   1. Discussion was around putting in a dog park near Hedgehog Mountain,
      1. Perhaps discuss with the Town Council at the next workshop on if this in the scope of the Conservation Commission, and getting staffing from the Town to help maintain this type of infrastructure,
      2. There was also some question about zoning on if this is allowed,
      3. Another concern is maintaining the dog waste stations which would be needed,
         1. Having the dog waste stations at the other properties in the past haven’t worked because they weren’t emptied.
      4. Next step to do the March meeting at Hedgehog to scout the property in and around there for a possible dog park to come up with a recommendation for the Town Council for the next workshop.
   2. Ryan Burke to send to the group the current ordinance for review and to markup.
   3. John Lowe spoke to issues on the Town properties with handicap accessibility,
      1. They can use Florida Lake to some extent, but only a small portion,
      2. Issues with signage on how accessible they are,
      3. Cited a ramp being put into South Freeport to get to a beach,
      4. Perhaps consider signage at trail kiosks, or information on trail difficulty on the Town Website,
      5. Ben Shepard mentioned that an initiative in the works before COVID to put in a multi-used paved trail as part of the LL Bean Headquarters project,
         1. Ben Shepard thought this was the best hope to get an ADA trail in town as the Conservation Commission properties have trails that are not designed to be ADA compliant.
6. Budget Update
   1. $300 of public education funds left,
   2. $1,211 of material funds left.
   3. Plus mowing funds.
7. I-295 bridge work at Exit 20 and 22,
   1. There will be a ballot item in March for Freeport to help fund multi-use paths on the new overpasses to be put in to replace the existing ones,
   2. Would widen what Maine DOT proposes to put in from a 6’ wide sidewalk to a 12’ wide path,
   3. A public hearing is coming up in the Town about this bond issue,
   4. Adam Bliss, the Town Engineer, had drawn up a plan to do a town wide loop path over I-295.
8. Adjourn
   1. Ben Shepard made a motion to adjourn,
   2. Mark Morrisey seconded,
   3. Meeting adjourned unanimously.

Next meeting: February 9th at 6:30pm via Zoom.