



LMAC (Land Management and Acquisitions Committee)

Members Present: John Adelman, Chair; Chris Kittredge, Vice Chair, Fred Farber; David Gagnon and Caleb Hemphill
Ex-officio Present: Jennifer Grimm, FLT Executive Director
Liaisons Present: Michael Vance, FLT President, Karen Jacobsen, Conservation Commission
Council Liaison Present: Ted Asherman
Staff Present: Amanda Stearns, Open Space Manager and Lucky D'Ascanio, Parks and Community Programs Director

Approved Meeting Notes Tuesday, December 8, 2020 – Via Zoom

1. **Call to Order** – John called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 am.
2. **Approval of Minutes** – The minutes from October 20, 2020 were approved unanimously with a motion by Dave and a second by Fred.
3. **2020 Accomplishments and Draft Annual Report – 2021 (FY22) Work Plan** – Amanda reviewed the draft annual report and noted that John had asked about discussing this year end as well as thinking ahead to next year. The draft work plan was reviewed as well with emphasis on the budget needed for the program. Highlights of the discussion included:
 - Wages are not included in the work plan and that will be noted.
 - Interest in knowing what the total expenses for the program. Lucky will work with Finance to get the costs for staffing. It was noted that OS is part of Parks and Community Programs (PCP) and there is staff sharing that will not be accounted for.
 - Program is expanding with increased acreage and trail mileage and should be budgeted accordingly.
 - Capital budget has been submitted and operating will be discussed in January.
 - It was noted that a comprehensive accounting of budgetary needs for maintenance and improvements is in the works.
4. **January 11 Town Council meeting**
 - a. Work plan update – Amanda reviewed the Council work plan update with the committee. This report addresses the Open Space Plan implementation assigned to the committee by the Council. It also recognizes highlights from this past year.
 - b. E-bike ordinance discussion – A quick review of the already approved draft was made. It continues to be the consensus of the committee that the ordinance amendment is warranted, and it will provide a basis for any enforcement that might be necessary.
5. **Pine Grove Field Day** – It was noted that some additional trail name signs could be placed at key intersection as well as the kiosks with trail maps. This work is on the comprehensive improvements list. Chris will forward his map files to Amanda when the map is finalized. His volunteer work is much appreciated.

6. **Tidewater trails** – Fred noted that the connector trail on the Emery Waterhouse property is unpassable at this time due to the bridges being removed. Amanda noted that the property representative is on the list to contact to attempt some agreement for trail use. It was agreed that, until an agreement is reached, no resources should be used here. The alternative connection is Clearwater Drive.

In Tidewater (town owned land) trails are being used and maintained by the Parks staff as well as Fred. Amanda posed the question whether or not a property management plan should be developed. It was confirmed that the demolition of the house and barn would be starting in the next week or so and Lucky will check with the staff managing the demo regarding appropriate signage to notify trail users.

7. **WRCF winter trail closure discussion** – Caleb asked Amanda to summarize the current status. Amanda reviewed the history of the property pertaining to the assumption of the DEP order by the town as well as the restrictions. The DEP order does not require the trail closure. The transfer to the town took place in 2013 and in 2017 the code of ordinances was amended to prohibit trail use from December 1 to March 30 each year. The original recommendation of LMAC and PACPAC was to restrict dogs as the concern was the disturbance of deer during the winter. Caleb suggested that with the allowed use of snowmobiles on snowmobiles trails transecting the property as well as the use for hunting, it seemed that this property might be treated the same as other similar properties in town where deer frequent. Caleb also noted that his understanding was that during the evaluation by IFW with regard to the value of the land for deer wintering was not conclusive. The harvest plan emphasized generating food resources. It is the largest trail area on the east side of town and is used regularly all winter by abutters since there are many access points other than the Woods and Longwoods entrances. The committee agreed that this discussion should continue at a future meeting.

8. **Other business** – Amanda updated the committee on a number of items:
 - a. Emerald ash borer. Open space is at low risk as we do not have any significant stands of ash. The entirety of Cumberland County remains in quarantine, prohibiting the movement of any ash into or out of the county. Our town forester, Paul Larrivee, is staying abreast of any developments. Some grants are available for testing for sites that contain at least 25% ash which we do not have. Staff will continue to monitor the situation and report to LMAC.
 - b. Staff position. It was noted earlier that the current budget includes a 29-hour part time Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator. Administration has approved the hiring of an interim Property Steward at reduced hours and this position has been advertised. Responsibilities will be limited to field work for the most part including managing volunteers, trail maintenance and improvements as well as monitoring properties.
 - c. Stream renaming. The Highland Lake Leadership Team has reached out through staff to inquire about the possible renaming of Suckfish Brook. Amanda noted that we have two conservation areas that bear the name and understood that there was some significance to the name but did not have the details. Lucky noted that many of our grants and other legal documents also bear the name. Other comments included that the City of Westbrook also uses the name for its section of the conservation area. It was the consensus of the committee that they are opposed to any consideration for renaming. Amanda will communicate this to the HLLT.
 - d. Pine Grove forestry walk – December 15 is the date and a time will be forthcoming.
 - e. Street acceptance – Amanda updated the committee on the consideration of streets in Alpine Woods off Winn Road for acceptance by the Council. The property includes

half of the Old Hurricane Road ROW that runs from Winn Road to Hadlock Road. With no street connectivity, the developer has offered trail easements that would, in conjunction with an agreement from CMP (recently acquired) the town might have public access for all but portion of the ROW. This could provide a major link between Community Park and Hadlock Community Forest. Caleb noted that while this is good news, from a street acceptance perspective it does not provide complete connectivity. Staff will keep the committee up to date on this development as trails should be established immediately if the easements are granted.

- f. 2014 LMF grant for NFCF – Amanda reported that a closing is getting closer. The LMF Board approved a modification to the award to avoid a conflict between the USFS Community Forest grant and the LMF encumbrance requirements. If the LMF Appraisal Oversight Committee approves the appraisals for certain properties, a closing could be scheduled this spring. The initial award was \$243,000.

9. **Adjourn** – John adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:45 am

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 12, 2020 at 9:00 am.