

## Minutes Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee

Thursday – March 18, 2021

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Chris Russo-Fraysier, Tim Rapenzynski, Fab Pattison, Jim Deshler, Carl Hilton VanOsdall  
Non-Committee Members in Attendance: Greg Rouleau, David Watson, Mark Cote.

*Note: The link to the Meeting did not work. The Meeting was rescheduled so that Members could connect. The Committee attempted to contact individuals that we knew were planning on attending and were successful in getting everyone connected with the exception of Steve Mackenzie. Committee members were all in favor of recording the Meeting and posting the recording to the City Web site and assumed this would meet the open meeting law requirement.*

- Call to order: 5:49 pm
- Adjustments to Agenda: None
- Approval of minutes (1-21-2021): Moved- Carl. Seconded-Fab. All in favor -Motion passes
- Agenda Items:

### **Communication Policy Reading:**

Committee discussed limiting discussions to 20 Minutes. If necessary, the topic will be continued at a future Meeting. Moved- Tim. Seconded- Chris

### **Updates:**

**Logo Contest-** Tim posted contest entries and gave credit to participants on the Committee's Social Media page- This was well received.

**Virtual Outing-** Fab shared route and highlights along the walk. GPS points will be added. Once finalized it will be posted to the Committees City Web site and shared on social media.

**Fenced Enclosure-** At the time of the Meeting- Bill Ahearn did not have any information on the enclosure. Carl will follow-up. The Committees desire is to remove the fence on Green-Up Day if we can be confident that it is not enclosing a hazard.

**Duffy Avenue Development-** Sale not finalized as of March 17, 2021. The Duffy Ave. paper street belongs to the City.

**Spring Ephemeral 'Outing'-** Social distancing requirement will likely still be in place this spring. Jim and Danielle will work on a virtual walk.

### **New Agenda Items:**

#### **Committee Positions and Member Recruitment-**

- Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee Member Recruitment and Expectation information sheet created several years ago was updated by Chris. The track/changed revision (Revision 1) was reviewed by members. Recommended revisions will be incorporated. Motion to accept Revision 1 as amended: Moved Carl, Seconded- Fab. All in favor. Motion passes.
- City Committee Position Requirements: Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Currently there is not a Vice -Chair or Secretary. Members were asked to consider these positions. Positions will be filled at our next Meeting. Vice-Chair must be willing to have his/her contact information posted on the City Web site, conduct meetings and respond to City staff and citizens questions when the Chair is not available. Secretary responsibilities will include submitting Meeting Minutes in accordance with Open Meeting Law requirements, draft Annual Report for Committee approval, initiate virtual Meetings and other duties to be discussed.

**Committee Goals and Needs-** Committees were asked to review/comment on document and complete an excel sheet by Mayor Herring. Chris completed the task and submitted the documents with Track/Change additions to the Committee for review. Motion to Submit the documents: Moved- Carl, Seconded-Jim. All in favor- Motion passes.

**VAST Connector Trail- Recent Trail Work:** Committee members were asked to visit the Pasture to view the recent tree trimming. Tree trimming instructions provided to the SnoBees were reviewed by Committee members prior to the Meeting (SnoBees 2020-2021 City Approval attachment and emails sent to the Club Prior to the March 6, 2021 trail work). Specific instructions in the email requested that the Spruce not be pruned, limbs were to be trimmed back to the main branch or trunk and proper pruning

techniques were to be used including: undercutting large limbs and leaving an appropriate collar that will allow the tree to heal.

Committee Comments: Some limbs were trimmed back to the trunk as required; in other instances, they were not. In several instances cuts were made without a proper collar that will promote healing rather than rot. Trees were cut. Tree cutting (vs trimming) was not approved. Limbs were trimmed off the Spruce tree in the upper meadow at some point this past season. All trimming requires approval. There was a specific request to not prune this tree in the March email unless the stubs that were left from prior trimmings by the Club were to be re-visited and properly pruned back to the trunk. Limb removal requires proper pruning technique ..bringing the limb back to a main branch, undercutting to avoid peeling the bark and a collar left to allow proper healing of the tree. Tree limbs were approved to be piled in the woods for wildlife habitat. Cut tree trunks and limbs were piled on the side of the trail. No additional pruning will be done this season.

SnoBee Comments: White Birches were cut because snow load brings the limbs low to the ground. Invasive honeysuckle shrubs were removed. Spruce was not trimmed in March. The Club did not complete the pruning they feel is needed north of the fork in the trail by the bench.

Recommendations: Committee should provide more specific instructions such as: tree trimmings must be piled 15-20 feet off the trail. Tree cutting requires Committee approval. If a tree is approved to be cut the trunk may be required to be bucked and removed from the property.

Agreement: Club Members will revisit the site once the ground has dried to avoid trail damage and will remove the tree trunks and pull the brush at least 15' off the trail in piles for wildlife habitat (does not need to be neatly stacked). Committee will update the 2021-2022 SnoBees Approval attachment that specifies approval conditions to reflect specific requirements discussed.

Green-up Day- May 1- Due to COVID restrictions it was decided that "Pods" of individuals associated with a Committee Member and known as trusted friends/family could socially distance and work on specific projects. Chris, Fab and Tim will work as a sub-Committee to propose projects and will follow-up with Committee Members.

AARP Grant- After the January Meeting, Chris noticed an opportunity to submit an AARP grant for a trail assessment and the creation of an alternative route for walkers that are concerned about safety on the shared VAST trail. Jim reached out to trail professionals for assistance in providing an estimate for the Grant. After learning that Erica Riel and Ted Wasazak were interested in pursuing the AARP Grant for a project, the Committee agreed to step back from the AARP Grant Application if they still wish to apply. We need to know ASAP if we will be applying so that we can proceed with the application and securing contracts. If the Committee does not apply for the AARP Grant we will shift to a State of Vermont Trails Grant. Chris and Jim will proceed with the Grant Application if Erica and Ted do not. Application is due April 14<sup>th</sup> and work must be completed the first week of November 2021. Council Approval will be required.

Future Meeting Location- Chris suggested that May/July and September Meetings be held in the Cow Pasture. There was general agreement with members that were still in attendance.

Adjourn: 7:08 p.m.. Fab- Motion to Adjourn, Moved-Tim. All remaining Committee Members approved.

**2021 Meeting Schedule:**

May 20, 2021

July 15, 2021

September 16, 2021

November 18, 2021

Time: 5:30 –6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location\*: Virtual meetings until further notice.

**Important Dates/Meetings:**

Green-Up Day- May 1, 2021

National Trails Day – June 5, 2021.