

Freedom Conservation Commission and Forest Advisory Committee

Tuesday, 20 June, 2023

7:00 pm

At the Freedom Town Hall

Minutes

1. Quorum Check, Roll Call – The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Jeff Nicoll. Present are: FCC: Jeff Nicoll, Michele Keenan, Paul Elie, R.A. Oram, Sue Hoople, Alice Custard

FAC: Ron Newbury, Janet Johnson, Sean Coriaty, Yvonne Hoyt

Also present: Chief Cunio, Barry Keith

Mike Crawford-The Nature Conservancy

Quorums are present for both organizations.

2. The Nature Conservancy Presentation - Freedom Town Forest Fire Management Plan-Mike Crawford. A wildfire risk reduction grant was received in 2019/20. A burn management plan is the first step in that process. The next step is to write burn plans for each site. The reason for the burn is that there is a natural historical role of fire in the barrens. Paul Elie asked about the duration of the burn. The fire will be ignited on one day, but it is monitored until all fire and smoke is out. The Town Forest would be broken into 5 compartments, and they would be taken one or two at a time. NH Prescribed Fire Council, NH National Guard, SpaceForce, Fish and Wildlife are some of the partners with the Conservancy for these burns. Operational goal is reduction of fuel along Ossipee Lake Road. The Southern Pine Beetle is another concern.

Jeff asked for an understanding of what our roles would be, and when. They are looking for input and suggestions at this point. Window of time for burn? Pitch pine are dormant in the spring. The best time is late summer. Mowing the scrub oak in July is beneficial. The burning is not a “once and done” process.

Michele asked what portion has been done previously. No prescribed burn has been done, just an area that burned due to fireworks.

Jeff asked about the financial responsibilities that we would have. The grant ends fall of 2024. It would have to happen by next late summer. \$5000 of resources has been committed as the town contribution.

What is the cost to burn 20 acres? It depends on the units. Broadcast mowing is roughly \$1000 per acre. The grant covers the cost of the actual burn.

Barry suggests prep work of removing key species ahead of a burn.

This work is consistent with what is already in the management plan.

Barry spoke about the Forest Maintenance Fund. He suggests if there is a vote tonight, the packet could be sent to the Legacy folks for review. They can come for a site visit.

FAC - A motion to approve the management plan was made by Janet J, seconded by Yvonne. APPROVED

FCC – A motion to approve the management plan dated January 2023 submitted by TNC, was made by Jeff, seconded by Alice. APPROVED – with Oram against.

Jeff made a motion to change the order of items 4 &5, Alice seconded. APPROVED

3. Freedom Town Forester 2023 Annual Spring Inspection Report – Barry reviewed his inspection report. Report was included in meeting packets.

5. Town Forest Land Use Application Review/Decision – from Rob Cunio for Freedom Fire&Rescue.

Michele made a motion to approve, Ron seconded – FAC APPROVED.

FCC – Jeff made a motion to approve, Michele seconded. APPROVED

Table discussion of page 2 of the Land Use Application- a motion to table was made by Jeff, seconded by Michele. APPROVED Paul opposed

4. Town Forest Signage Update – signs were shown to members.

6. Project: Japanese Knotweed Remediation – Jeff made a motion to table, Paul seconded. APPROVED

7. Review/Approval of 16 May 2023 FCC Meeting Minutes – Sue made a motion to approve, Paul seconded. APPROVED

8. Review/Approval of 03 May 2023 FAC Meeting Minutes – Ron made a motion to approve, Janet seconded. APPROVED

9. Approval of invoices

a. BH Keith and Associates - \$875.00 Janet made a motion to approve, Sean seconded. APPROVED by FAC

Jeff made a motion to approve BH Keith invoice 4/24/23 – Alice seconded. APPROVED by FCC

10. Review of Meena LLC development in Effingham -

11. Other business to come before the commission/committee

12. Public Comment

Alice made a motion to adjourn at 9:09pm, Michele seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Donaldson

Recording Secretary

Note: Deadline for agenda items for this meeting closed at 12pm on June 13, 2023