

A Public Meeting of the
Freedom Conservation Commission and Forest Advisory Committee
will be held
Tuesday, 19 December, 2023
6:30 pm

At the Freedom Town Hall

Minutes

Quorum Check, Roll Call – The meeting was called to order at 6:44 pm by Jeff Nicoll.

Present are:

FAC – Ron Newbury, Sean Coriaty, (Michele Keenan-Rep to FAC from FCC), Yvonne Hoyt (6:58 pm)

FCC – Jeff Nicoll, R.A. Oram, Paul Elie, Michele Keenan, Linda Mailhot, Alice Custard
Dave George is also present.

Jeff made a motion that once approval of invoices is completed, a break will be taken for refreshments (intermission) then FAC members can leave if they choose to. Linda seconded. APPROVED

Approval of November 21, 2023 FCC/FAC Meeting Minutes – Alice made a motion to approve, Linda seconded. APPROVED

Town Forest CLSP Annual Inspection – December 5, 10 am. Steve Walker from CLSP came to do the inspection. Jeff attended, as well as Barry. It is recommended to do it earlier in the year next year. Steve is retiring, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) is taking over the inspections. Once the new hire is in place, Steve will bring that person to our forest to show them around. Boundary marking on Shawtown Road is an issue Jeff raised. Ron stated that there are flags there.

Town Forest Projects – distributed in packet.

Repair of Trout Pond Trail - \$35000 warrant article. We need to get two other bids.

Timber Harvest

Salvage Operation – discussed at inspection

Trail signage – signs have been purchased. Figure out where they are going to be mounted.

Boundary marking – Ron has been spearheading this effort. Barry recommended that we get new 11x17 maps of the forest from HEB that Ron can use year after year.

Cold Brook Culvert – (Per Dave George) the culvert is fine. The beavers are tenacious. An overflow culvert was placed. The metal culvert Dave Charette placed has deteriorated.

Replacing that might last 4-5 years. Try putting it back together after mud season. Wildlife crossing is discussed.

Look into additional mowing of wildlife clearings and openings.

Compartment 1 – not accessible to logging equipment at this time. Bridge access is poor. Grants are available to help with this.

Parking lot levelling – Scrub Oak Scramblers levelled it last year, will maintain or rake it after mud season.

Kiosk maintenance

Oram recommends having Barry attend the next meeting to discuss the checklist.

Ron – gates numbers need to change to match the new maps. Ron will take care of this in the spring. He will also paint a couple of gates that need attention.

FAC//FCC budget vote for 2024 – final budget presented to Selectmen was distributed with packets. Draft language for the warrant articles was included. Insert the correct \$ amounts and send to Selectmen. 4% inflation to be considered? Oram suggests changing the \$4000 request to \$5000. A motion to increase the \$4000 to \$5000 was made by Ron, seconded by Sean. APPROVED

Oram made a motion that the FCC vote on the increase, Jeff seconded. APPROVED

Forester budget of \$6700 – Ron made a motion to accept that recommendation, Yvonne seconded. APPROVED

FCC – the figure was a result of discussion between Jeff and Barry on December 5 at the inspection. Alice made a motion to approve, Oram seconded. APPROVED

\$35000 for Trout Pond Trail – increase for inflation? Add 5%, \$1750 – making the Article \$37000. Ron made a motion to accept recommendation of \$37000 for repairs on Trout Pond Trail, Michele seconded. APPROVED

Oram made a motion to accept the \$37000 figure, seconded by Alice. APPROVED

\$5000 to conduct controlled burn at pine barrens – Dave George suggests putting a donation box at the kiosk. Ron made a motion to approve this amount, Sean seconded. APPROVED

FCC – Linda made a motion to approve the warrant language at \$5000, Paul seconded. APPROVED

Approval of Invoices –

BH Keith – 9/27-12/1/23 – \$750 Linda questioned the dates on the invoice as compared to one that was approved last month. Research clarified. Yvonne made a motion to approve, Ron seconded. APPROVED

Oram would like to see copies of the grants as a training aid. Jeff has requested copies.

Oram made a motion to approve, Alice seconded. APPROVED

Ron was recognized for his commitment to the Town Forest.

Melissa was recognized for her service.

Alice was recognized for her involvement with the FCC for many years.

Yvonne made a motion to adjourn the FAC meeting at 8:15 pm, Michele seconded. The FAC meeting was adjourned.

The FCC meeting began at 8:15 pm.

Oram made a motion to amend the agenda to have public comment at this time, Paul seconded APPROVED

PUBLIC COMMENT: Greg and Megan Broderick - Bruce Howlett's email was discussed. They are requesting future assistance from a funding standpoint for water testing. Middle Danforth is considered an impaired body of water by the State of NH. Jeff advised that it is too late for this year, but that there will be time to work on this over the next year.

FCC Rules of Procedure Revision – Article 5 - Section 9 – FAC meets on first Wednesday. Revisit the RSA reference. Remove the wording about the time that the FAC meets. Will meet monthly and advise. Section 9 – The Forest Advisory Committee, under RSA 36A-A:2 will meet monthly and will advise the Commission on management decisions for the town forest. Linda made a motion to change the wording as reflected above, Alice seconded. APPROVED

Page 6 Article 11 section 1 – change the meeting time to 6:30 pm

Section 5 – change mailed to distributed – A meeting packet shall be distributed to all members.....

Linda made a motion to approve the amended procedures as discussed, Michele seconded. APPROVED

FCC/FAC website content – list included in packet, mission statement draft. In the mission statement, Michele recommends referencing RSA 36-A. Oram - FCC works closely with the residents of Freedom, Selectboard, Planning Board and Zoning Board. Michele- Use Natural Resource Inventory in the last line.

Link to purchase

Link to donate money – need policy on this

Oram suggests holding a meeting once a year, to bring in all the associations (Broad Bay, Loon Lake, etc.)

Other business to come before the commission – Land use change tax – there were some accounting errors. Auditor has fixed this (included in packets). \$195,858 is in the conservation fund.

Public Comment – see above

Adjourn – Linda made a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm, Michele seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Donaldson
Recording Secretary