

Thompson Trails Committee MINUTES

Monday, February 7, 2022, 7:00 pm

In attendance: Karen Durlach, John Kochinskas, Lucille Langlois, Brian Loffredo, Mike Lageunesse; Charlie Obert, David Ostrowski, Paul Provost; Town Planner Tyra Penn-Gesek; Ed Greenough, USACE; LyAnn Graff, TLGV; Katlin Larsson; Phil Rutledge; Valerie Clark; Selectman Amy St. Onge

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Lucille moderated.

Brian made a MOTION, seconded by John, to accept minutes of February 7, 2022. All in favor.

Correspondence:

- Congratulatory email sent from Trails Committee to Laurie Giannotti on her retirement from DEEP
- emails with Becky Kalagher & Phil Rutledge (see below) about Quinebaug rail trail

Finances: Balance as of 3/31/22 is \$7,762.97, less John needing reimbursement for recent supplies, previously voted for. T-shirt account balance of \$1,747 is in question as to whether this is included or additional.

• ***MOTION made by Lucille, seconded by Brian, to allocate \$800 for rental of port-o-john for April to November 2022. All in favor.***

• ***MOTION made by Mike, seconded by John, to spend up to \$1200 to purchase additional t-shirts as sizes depleted. All in favor.***

Decision to raise shirt price to \$25 after next new order comes in.

Pat will take over monitoring of T-shirt project.

• ***MOTION made by Paul, seconded by Charlie, to allocate up to \$300 for supplies required to maintain equipment (gas, oil, saw sharpening, etc.). All in favor.***

• ***MOTION made by Brian, seconded by Lucille, to allocate up to \$400 to print and replenish maps brochures as needed. All in favor.***

• ***MOTION made by Lucille, seconded by Brian, to allocate up to \$200 to be designated as “petty cash” that Karen use to authorize unforeseen expenses of Trails Committee. All in favor.***

Citizen's Comments

• Katlin Larsson presented her Scout Project for 6 interactive nursery rhyme story boards to be installed along the paved section of Heritage Way Trail behind Drafters, Rt. 12. Installation & maintenance discussed. Suggestion to clear project with town agencies. Installation between April 10-17; required completion date 5/3.

• Phil Rutledge, representing Bay State Trail Riders discussed their interest in working with Thompson Trails. Discussion on the CT connection between Dudley and Southbridge and other options for connections to the Air Line Trail, old trolley trails and plotting other routes.

Events:

• West Thompson Lake **Blain Bridge RIBBON-CUTTING**, Friday, April 22:

Timeline: hikers & paddlers to meet 1:30 at boat ramp, leave by 2:00;

3:00 formal ribbon cutting & speakers

Ed Greenough, USACE, reported USACE working on the road approaches to new Blain Bridge and VIP parking areas. Rangers will post signs for the event. Rangers will lead hike & paddle, monitor VIP parking area.

Tyra is following up with previous invitations to elected officials and will contact WINY for day-of coverage. Press release to run in *The Villager* week of the 15th.

To paddle with TLGV requires preregistration; 7 signed up so far.

Rob Paton contacted about inviting bike riders.

- **Litter League:** “Thompson Trash Pandas” kicks off in May, after April Clean-up—concept designed; need to recruit sponsorships & teams; work out team bag tracking, prizes & disposal details (special permit?) **Role of Trails Committee** can be as a team and/or to suggest key sites on trails that need attention.
- **TLGV Spring Outdoors:** 90+ events online. John posted Ribbon Cutting.
- **CT Trails Day:** Saturday, June 4 John leading a morning hike on 4.25-mile loop, Orange Trail.
- Rail-to-Trails Conservancy has April 23 designated as “Trails Day” with event passing through Thompson.

Trail updates:

- May 14th scheduled for clearing Air Line of obstacles before mowing. Meet at New Road parking lot. Suggestion: ask Recreation Department to do an email blast to their list.
- Air Line Train Wreck Park: on-site meeting with sign company. One sign is fine as is. Two signs need adjustment. Quote provided for either a die-cut vinyl white backing or a complete white panel to enhance photos. Majority prefer retaining some see-through area of window. Grant money sufficient to cover. Tyra will request quote for additional option of adding an image to reverse side of entry-way sign.
- Discussion of drainage on ALT under road overpasses. Set up a meeting with new head of DPW for advice.

Social Media/PR/maps

- Eastern Regional Tourism District has agreed to pay for EZ-fold map reprints
- Charlie adding regular checks on QR code stickers to maintenance plan

Reports from Neighboring Towns

- 12-Town Task Force: Tyra & Brian or Karen will represent Thompson on marketing sub-committee working with media consultants; most of work already done for EZ-map
- Putnam March meeting: Weston & Sampson presented 4 possible connector routes with reasons for first choice option discussed. No contact yet with railroad. Tyra and Delpha Very discussing a possible “Gateways & Gaps” partnership grant to move the ALT connection forward.

Equipment Status:

- additional Echo-PAS-2620 gas power head unit purchased & available for use.

Future agenda items:

May work party & ALSPT mowing
Litter League

Motion & second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned 9:08 p.m.

NEXT BUSINESS MEETING: Monday, May 2, 2022, 7:00 p.m.