

Thompson Trails Committee MINUTES “SPECIAL MEETING”
Monday May 4, 2020, 7:00pm via the Zoom online platform

In attendance: Karen Durlach, John Kochinskas, Mike Lajeunesse, Lucille Langlois, Brian Loffredo, Charlie Obert, David Ostrowski, Paul Provost; Tyra Penn-Gesek, Town Planner; Lesley Munshower, Thompson Recreation Director; Lyann Graff, TLGV

Host Lesley Munshower explained housekeeping rules for Zoom meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Charlie made MOTION, seconded by Mike, to accept minutes of February 3, 2020. All in favor.

Correspondence:

- Michael Guillot contacted us to volunteer to steward a section of the Orange Trail. He was given USACE Ranger contact information to report any major trail problems
- Ken Pickren of Southbridge reported to Karen about contact and information exchange with a representative from P&W (G&W) railroad
- Monique Wolanin would like to talk to us about Putnam “Tackle the Trail” 10/17/20 roadrace/fundraiser
- CT Trail Census CC’d us on request to Selectmen’s office about setting up online Air Line Trail user surveys (via QR codes)
- Jacob Keyes wrote to tell us proposed Park Ranger Program on hold

Finances: no updated report; Airbrush Shack t-shirt vendor has been paid for next shirt order

T-shirts: Discussion & decision to eliminate the word “committee” from the back of the orange shirts and not replace it with any other wording that would confuse usage since the public is buying shirts

Trail updates:

- John reported several trees down, crossing the trail behind Knights of Columbus and vandalism; Lesley said DPW is aware and has repair/remediation plans for painted rocks, benches, removing graffiti, replacing barrier
- Air Line very busy; stone dust still needed about 1/2-3/4 mile near Sand Dam Rd.; DPW trimming looks great; full parking lots noticed; Tri-State looks good, heavy traffic at times

Requests for more areas that need DPW do trimming should be requested through Kelley in Selectmen’s office. Emphasize heavy current trail usage and we want to “put Thompson’s best foot forward” during this outdoor season.

Suggestion to use “Sign-Up Genius” online scheduler to avoid too many people going to do trail work at the same time.

*** Lucille made a MOTION, seconded by John, to spend \$500-\$600 to rent ONE accessible port-o-potty for the New Road parking lot for May through September. All in favor.**

Events:

- Cyclocross March 29, 2020 was cancelled
 - **June CT Trails Day/TLGVSpring Outdoors 6/6:** events will be listed online with locations but no time/date specified and no leaders, encouraging folks to tour on their own keeping social distancing guidelines in mind; leaders requested to create short videos of various walks (John working on his)
 - **Turkey Trot 2020:** preferred date November 8 still to be confirmed (request in to USACE)
- Discussion of increasing TEEG’s share of the proceeds due to their increased needs during the pandemic and promoting the race to highlight that fundraising goal.

Brian made a MOTION, seconded by John, to donate, for the 2020 race, an additional 10% to TEEG (from the 25% Trails Committee share of proceeds, making Trails share 15%). All in favor. Recreation Comm. will vote separately on how to designate their 25% share.)

Mike suggested Turkey Trot Committee consider plans for a “virtual walk” to still raise funds if race cannot take place.

Train Wreck park project: Tyra shared text of “Call for Songwriters” competition flyer developed with NPS consultants which she will post to various social media sites. Contest calls for original songs written about Great Thompson Train Wreck to be submitted May 4th -29th and winner chosen by popular vote. Going live for CT Trails Day and voting through 6/26. (See version of final flyer on Thompson website & Trails Facebook)

Paul reported he is refilling Great Thompson Train Wreck flyers every time he visits kiosk. **Karen made a MOTION seconded, by Mike to spend \$100 to reprint flyers when needed. All in favor.**

Discussion about trash receptacles: decision to *not* provide dumping opportunities. Karen will query Matt Quinn if DEEP has any standard signs used for state parks about asking public to “pack it in, pack it out.”

- TLGV Grant: “Traveling Through Thompson” Wayfinding project: June date to come for public workshop; CME contract signed and active; Tyra will be spending reimbursable Trails funds already committed to project

Social Media/PR/maps

- John reported views of Facebook page very much higher and Instagram getting more.
- Tyra reported on map/brochure mailer project she is working on with Thompson EDC and other towns in the 12-Town group, and Eastern Region Tourism District. (Trails Committee has no funds committed to this project but will have input on map.)

“Twelve Town Taskforce” potentially meeting in June; sub-groups have been meeting

Reports from neighboring towns

- Putnam Trails Committee met 4/28/20 via Zoom to discuss potential juggling of their D.O.T. and DEEP grants, reassigning DEEP grant money for the Air Line Putnam to Thompson connector.

NEXT BUSINESS MEETING: Monday, June 1, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned 8:28 p.m.