

Strafford Conservation Commission
April 23, 2019

Present: Mike Hebb, Kate Root, Dave Paganelli, Chuck Sherman, Micki Colbeck, Jared Jenisch, and Steve Wilbanks, Chair

Prior to the meeting, the commission heard a proposal from Amelia Bailey-Kellogg, member of a local Girl Scout troop, regarding community service projects at the Old City Falls Nature Area:

- They would start with spring cleanup, including picking up sticks, raking leaves, throwing away trash
- They would also work at the pavilion, scraping and painting surfaces as necessary to improve its appearance
- Kids under a certain age would have a parent present, and there would be adult supervision at all times
- This would be organized by a team of three girls, from a Troop of 12 or 13 members, all girls from the 4th and 5th grades
- This is for the bronze award, which is the highest award you can get as a Junior Girl Scout, and it requires community service.
- They would also like to create information stations with posters about safety, and also a more detailed history of Old City Falls than is already there
- They would possibly finish the project with a music and dance performance by the troop, and with a presentation to the community about Old City Falls and the nature of their project

The Commission welcomed the idea and established some connections between the Girl Scouts, members of the commission and Tim McCormick, who oversees Old City Falls park, to begin moving forward with it.

Meeting

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

The April meeting is the organizational meeting. The Officers for the past year were Steve Wilbanks, Chair; Kate Root, Vice Chair; and Jared Jenisch, Recording Secretary.

- There was a motion to accept all three to continue with their positions; the motion carried.

Ashley Community Forest update:

- There is not much new to report. There is still positive support from both the Strafford and Sharon selectboards. They are seeking bids for surveying and marking the boundaries of the property. The Alliance of Vermont Communities had intended to pay for this, but didn't raise as much money as they had planned. They are still hoping to raise the entire sum.
- Tours of the land are currently being arranged to generate interest in the parcel. Dave suggested a full day of events of different kinds, wetland tours, historical information, etc; and possibly providing lunch or snacks. Mike Hebb and Kathy Thompson will be leading a natural history/birdwatching tour of the property.

Content for website: Look at the town's website, the Commission's page, and also the page for natural resources, and brainstorm more possible content for these pages

Trails:

- Mike noted that the Town Forest was hit hard during the winter. Many of the smaller spruce, scotch pine, and white pines near the trail lost their tops. There is still a lot of water in the vicinity.

Wetlands:

- Kate and Jared had a first wetlands planning meeting for the season
- Mike noted that there are a couple of wetlands that would be good to visit near Miller Pond road. When specific dates are available, Mike will ask the landowners for permission to visit.

Old business:

- The Four-Town Planning Commission will conclude their series of meetings on Thursday in Tunbridge; Kate will report on that meeting
- Trail system management plan: agreement was reached that trails should be open to all human-powered locomotion, including bicycles. The wording of the management plan will be amended accordingly.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 28th.

Respectfully submitted,
 Jared Jenisch
 Recording Secretary