

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT  
TOWN FOREST STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2026**

- 1) **ROLL CALL:** Jeremy Whalen, Andrew Padilla, Dylan Alsbach, Russ Barrett, Ginny Kunkel
- 2) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None
- 3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026. Motion to approve minutes by Russ, seconded by Ginny. Minutes approved 5-0
- 4) **Agenda updates or additions:** None
- 5) **UPDATES AND DISCUSSION**
  - a) **Shaw Center update:**
    - i) Andrew has been keeping the fairways of the new disc golf course mowed. The course map is online, and people are playing it. The temporary tee box stakes are being put in as well.
    - ii) MABA was having a group ride tonight and have another scheduled in July.
    - iii) Landslide repair behind the Shaw Center building is now complete. Those repairs were covered by FEMA funds.
    - iv) Norwich received funds for Engineering study for repair options for the Lybrand trail. The engineer's fees are now higher than the original estimate, and Norwich is working with the engineers to reduce the scope of work and use the funds.
    - v) Contractors are wrapping up the cleanup of the staging area in the slate pit used during the water tank replacement project. The contractors removed the old platform.
    - vi) Some Facebook posts have appeared around clearing fallen tree on Shaw and Town Forest's property. The TFSC is responsible for cleaning up trees across trails, and posted a response asking that trees get reported to TFSC for clearing.
    - vii) There is also some talk about a trail clean-up day, not sure who is organizing it. Andrew will stop and talk with MABA this week.
  - b) **Cheney Field parking, and access days update**
    - i) The working group for Cheney Field access is planning to hold two access days in Cheney Field this summer, on August 8<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>. The details are still being worked out, but the group has contacted Mayo, which is interested in bringing some residents up.
    - ii) The conversation about permanently parking in the field was held with the town's water and sewer manager. He said that full-time parking isn't an option because it would require a significant investment in fencing and security mandated by state law to protect the field from potential tampering.
    - iii) The group is still exploring other options, including Byam Hill and Slate Ave, to expand accessibility.
    - iv) TFSC will invite the Walkability group to next month's meeting to continue discussing details of fall access days
  - c) **Cheney Field Restoration Recommendations proposal update**

- i) TFSC Bill and Ginny met with the NRC and VTRANS to discuss recommendations for the restoration of Cheney Field post-construction. Those recommendations were presented to the NCC at the April meeting and subsequently forwarded to the Town Manager. We received a positive response from the Town Manager, and the restoration recommendations were being forwarded to the contractor. At the time of the request, 80% of the work had been completed, mostly around the tank. The road cut across the field from the Norwich property will be restored as recommended. The main recommendation was the type of seed mix used. The mix being native plant mixture free of invasives.
- ii) Cheney Field restoration and clean-up should be complete by the end of the week.
- d) Thoughts from the Biodiversity Trails presentation, and next steps
  - i) The group discussed whether they were interested in exploring a Biodiversity trail that was presented at the previous meeting. Discussed the concerns about whether people would interact with a QR code or not. Generally, the TFSC is interested in developing a small pilot program to gauge interest. Jeremy to reach out to Steve and start working on concepts for a pilot project.
- e) Garvey Hill blow downs
  - i) More downed trees were reported over on Garvey Hill from a wind storm a few weeks back. The committee previously worked with the school to clear trees using ARPA funds and contracting with VYCC. There was a discussion about whether the TFSC has the capacity to help clear trees on Garvey, given its school property. Jeremy was going to take a hike to survey the extent of the damage and talk with the school to see if they plan to do any cleanup.
- f) Roxbury Outdoor Committee
  - i) Ginny attended the ROC meeting to introduce our committee and offer any help or collaboration in the future, the ROC might be interested in. The ROC had some question about how we have dealt with parking, and neighboring property owners.
  - ii) The ROC also had a presentation from a group called Velomont. Velomont is working to create a north-to-south trail across the state using roads and trails, with access to local towns as an economic driver for local communities. They have worked their way up to Randolph and are exploring their next ways north. The TFSC will also contact Velomont to see if there is any interest in coming through Northfield for the town's economic benefit.
- 6) Public Participation (Unscheduled): None
- 7) Other Business:
  - a) Town Forest easement: The NCC and VLT held three public meetings about the creation of an easement for the town forest. The next step is to get on the Select Board agenda, check back in, and see if they will approve the NCC's continued work with VLT to formally create an easement.
  - b) Dustin's pasture boundary marking. TFSC members started marking the boundaries of the town-owned Dustin's pasture parcel and got about halfway through it last fall. The TFSC will continue the boundary marking this summer.
- 8) Adjourn 19:30