

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**TOWN FOREST STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of April 16, 2024**

**I. ROLL CALL: All Present (Andrew and Colin joined in progress)**

**II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED): None**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Approved 5-0-1)**

**IV. UPDATES AND DISCUSSION**

**a. Shaw Center update**

- I posted a Facebook post about Northfield Trails being closed above Cheney and the NU trails being closed to biking. Foot traffic is okay on NU trails. I can't close them entirely because of various end-of-year programs by groups on campus.
- I will submit an announcement to the NU community this week.
- There is a sign in our display case with closures. I hope to have new posts up this summer on the trailheads of the red and green trail so I can post signs there.
- We should be done with FTXs. If you notice anything amiss, let me know, and I will try to find those responsible and sort it out.
- We got a VOREC grant to rebuild the skills trail behind the Shaw. Waiting to find out the status of the landslide repair.
- Bizhan and Jim (CFO) should be deciding on spending money on the Lybrand engineering plan (16k). Coming to the wire on FEMA funding and the engineering plan is necessary to determine how much the repairs will cost.
- Hopefully, we will have an MOU for the NU Disc Golf Course for the select board's next meeting to finish up our ARPA request.

**b. HS trails working group (Gravey Hill)**

- Mo is spearheading a survey for what uses the school and community wants to use the trails for
- The form does not clearly state that community input is welcome. Jeremy is working with Mo to correct this and will repost it on Facebook.
- HSTWG has not met since the last TFSC meeting and meets on 4/17/24
- Working with VYCC to potentially come through to help clear blowdowns on HS trails

**c. E-Bike discussion**

- Andrew has notes that he provided
  1. He met with Kip with ORO
  2. ORO offered to bring demo day

3. Andrew contacted VMBA and got some good feedback on resources. Waiting for call back.

4. [Commonground.org](http://Commonground.org) - e-bike guidance

- Nelson - met with Kip, who may be able to come meet with us to discuss concerns.
- Ginny mentions that TFS Plan does not provide for motorized travel. Asks for clarity around where the discussion currently lies.
- Nelson recaps the classes of e-bikes. Even though they have motors, they are not generally recognized as "motorized" by most land managers.
- The group weighs in on the current discussion surrounding e-bikes. Our current status is that we are still learning and deciding how to move forward.
- Russ mentions MAMBA contacted him for a trail connector from Irish Hill to Town Forest land.

#### **d. Trail closures and signage**

- Just before the eclipse, Jeremy posted trail closure.
- Jeremy has signs that he wants to put up sometime soon.
- Jeremy mentions conditions in Cheney are a little soft.
- Ray gives an update on trails up to Beaver Pond - less than 10% soggy and that there are four blowdowns above 3rd bridge
- Nelson explains the group's approach to trail stewardship
- Ginny will inspect the area above the beaver pond and report on blowdowns and trail conditions.

#### **e. Solar eclipse viewing event wrap-up**

- Memorial Park Road was closed by the police at some point
- Andrew mentions there were a lot of people at Memorial Park

#### **f. Joint NCC and TFSC topics for the May meeting**

- Meeting is on May 23 - in person at the community room
- No TFSC in May
- Jeremy asks for topics
  1. looping in NCC on e-bike discussion
  2. Ridgeline trail connecting Irish Hill. MAMBA is leading the effort to test the waters.
  3. Town Forest Stewardship Plan updates
  4. Maple taping lease on Berlin side status update

#### **g. Audubon Society and Cheney Field plan**

- Jeremy spoke with David Mears about town forest management topics in response to some questions from SB member Shernock.
- Jeremy connected with Tim Duclos from the Audubon Society. In 2010, Audubon submitted a bird assessment of the town forest. There is potential to update the plan at some point in the future and have discussions about Cheney Field management.

#### **h. Town forest plan update**

- Zoning is still ongoing
- Russ is still waiting to hear back from the county forester for an updated plan
- Questions about how the Town Forest land is managed
- All paths forward are in the hands of the Select Board

### **V. Public Participation (Unscheduled)**

#### **VI. Other Business**

- Spring cleanup day planning
  1. Jeremy is going to put a poll out for potential days in May
- Discussion about mowing plan and map that Nelson found from Colin and Lydia.
- Colin looked into the Crosscut Chainsaw Program. The Forest Service does provide training. We would need to enter a volunteer partnership with GMNF, WMNF, or other stakeholders.
- Colin contacted Dan McCloglin - the sawyer program manager for the eastern region.
- Nelson mentions previous volunteer agreements that may need to be signed and submitted to the Select Board.
- Ray mentions tracking volunteer hours
- Ray will assemble a Google spreadsheet to track hours and send it to everyone.

### **VII. Adjournment 19:08**