

**Town of Northfield, Vermont**  
**Northfield Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of the December 14, 2022**

1. Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Nigel at 6:26 p.m. with Nigel, Debbie, Russ, Ruth, David, Jeremy, Mariela in attendance.

2. Public Participation-scheduled: none

3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the October 26<sup>th</sup> 2022 meeting were approved on a motion by Ruth, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Russ, unanimous. It is noted that the November 2022 meeting was cancelled.

4. NCC New Membership: Mariela, Mo Sweich was introduced to the group and welcomed.

5. Updates:

A. Debbie gave an update on the VOREC grant. A first meeting with Dubois & King was held Monday evening to begin the way-finding plan. Jason Enders, a local graphic designer, is assisting with this project. Nelson Hoffman is interested in participating and other members of NCC and TFSC are welcome to attend meetings. The invasive species removal and vista clearing project round 1 has been completed. The contract with the state should be finalized shortly. Tom Davis, economic development director is spearheading an application for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant that would provide funding to complete the restoration of the Lybrand/Slate Avenue Trail.

B. Current Tree Planting Grant: Ruth reported that she submitted all the information needed to have this grant completed but the town has not yet sent in the report. Nigel will ask Jeff about the status of this grant.

6. Discussion

A. Dog River Symposium Wrap up and Discussion of River Oriented Projects:

Several ideas were offered by members including; invasive removal (knotweed), tree planting, CVRPC water quality grants, and projects identified in the NRRR Planning report. Members thought inviting Friends of the Winooski and CVRPC to a meeting to discuss this further would be a good idea. Eligibility for water quality grants requires a group to become pre-qualified. Nigel will reach out to Michele Braun from Friends of the Winooski, and Brian Voigt from CVRPC to invite them to a meeting.

B. Town Forest Stewardship Committee: Jeremy reported that the group met on 11/15 but will not meet again until 2023. They hope to discuss goals for the year then. Jeremy thanked Russ, Mat and Nelson for doing the Fall clean up on the trails. The group discussed Winter trail maintenance and agreed to keep the Cheney field to Beaver Pond section of the Paine Mountain Trail maintained. If anyone notes a tree or branch down, contact one of the TFSC members. The group would like to contain the patch of knotweed in Cheney field. Simon Pearish who is the chair of the Dog River Park Committee, knows of a project in Waitsfield removing knotweed without use of herbicides. A February meeting at Norwich University to discuss knotweed is planned. Jeremy would like to talk to Mo about recruiting a high school student to join the TFSC.

C. EAB Update to Select Board: Russ attended the Select Board meeting last night and requested that they determine a strategy to deal with Emerald Ash Borer. There are 3 options: do many tree removals initially, do nothing and deal with fallen trees as they come down, or a middle of the road approach where the most dangerous trees are removed regularly. Members of the Select Board were referred to the website: <https://vtinvasives.org> for further information. They requested the EAB survey map. Posting an EAB map in the town offices was suggested and annual updates to the Select board are planned. Russ was thanked for his timely update to the Select Board given that budget discussions have begun.

D. New Tree Planting Grant: Nigel reported that he and Ruth met to work on the next grant for tree planting. This should be out for approval shortly. David asked about the size of the trees planted and Russ said that larger trees are recommended for urban tree grants.

7. Budget Update: Nigel presented an overview of the NCC budget as he is working on the 23/24 budget. Expenses in the admin and supplies & maintenance categories will remain the same as the present year. In the contract services category, it was suggested the line item for tree inoculation be renamed, tree maintenance, watering and planting, with the intent to ask for \$1,000 in this category. Email Nigel with any ideas on budget for discussion at our next meeting.

8. Public Participation-Unscheduled: none

9. Other Business: Debbie asked Nigel to write a letter of support for the RTP grant on behalf of the NCC. Nigel moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Debbie that the NCC support the Recreational Trails Program grant by writing a letter of support. Unanimous.

10. Topics for January 2023 Meeting: Nigel asked that members send topics for the agenda for this meeting.

11. Adjournment: On a motion by Russ, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jeremy, the meeting was adjourned at 7:51. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

*Deborah Zuaro*