

Town of Northfield, Vermont
Town Forest Stewardship Committee
Minutes of August 18, 2026

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Ginny Kunkel, Andrew Padilla, Russ Barrett, Bill Dell’Isola, Dylan Alsbach, Jeremy Whalen.
Public: Tim Swartz, Mary Nadon Scott, DeLane McIlvene, Kaitlyn Keating, Janan Hamm
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED): Accessibility, Walkability, and Pedestrian Safety Task Force. Cheney Field Practice day update**
 - a. Mary shared details of email response from Town Manager concerning the practice day and task requested to be evaluated. Overall the practice was great. AWPS brought a truck and trailer, Mary’s van and a few other cars up, all vehicles navigated the hairpin turn with no issue. Discussed requesting some traffic cones to put on the right-hand side going uphill before the turn, as there is an old stone wall and edge there. AWPS will try to get Mayo and the Veterans Home to do a dry run before bringing residents up. September pilot day will be held on a weekday to accommodate Mayo and Veterans Home staffing levels. Next step is to summarize findings and report back to Town Manager for approval to run pilot day.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** July 21st, 2026: Bill motion to approve, seconded by Russ. **Passed 5-0-1**
- IV. **AGENDA UPDATES OR ADDITIONS:**
- V. **UPDATES AND DISCUSSION**
 - a. **Shaw Center update:** Skill trail behind Shaw is almost complete. Apex Trail Works is doing the work. Andrew is starting to look for sponsors for the disc golf course tee boxes. The fairways have not been mowed in a few weeks. Trail mowing will be completed later this month or in early September. Students start to return this coming weekend, with Rooks coming to campus on Saturday. Norwich has created an outdoor school that blends geology and writing. Andrew set up a classroom tent by the paintball shed for the class. The Lybrand Trail Engineering Feasibility Study is nearly complete; FEMA funded this project. Andrew will share the final report with TFSC and NCC.

- b. Northfield VMBA Chapter update:** Greater Northfield Area Riders (GNAR) is currently functioning as a group and not a VMBA chapter. They have been coordinating with Andrew and conducting trail work on Shaw Center trails, primarily the orange trail. Jeremy and Bill both want an agreement with GNAR outlining trail work on both properties.
- c. Town Forest easement update:** Town Manager has been working to create a meeting with a few stakeholders to discuss an easement on the Town Forest. A date hasn't been set, but it will be soon.
- d. Audubon assessment report:** Tim Duclos shared the assessment report with Russ recently. He conducted the assessment in 2024 and gave it to the county forester, but we hadn't seen a copy. The TFSC will be reviewing it for discussion at future meetings.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED): None

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Cheney Field mowing:** Jeremy emailed the Town Manager asking to have the field mowed this fall. The field hasn't been mowed in three years, and if not done this year, it could become too overgrown to mow. The Town Manager will contact the company Andrew is using for the trails later this fall and coordinate with them to mow Cheney as well. Ginny asked about the October mowing recommendation in the Audubon report. Jeremy stated that we need to complete it this year, and we can discuss timing for future mowings. Bill suggested we ask about potential volunteers to mow Cheney for the town. Members discussed knotweed control and removal from the field. Bill is going to investigate funding through CISMA for potential knotweed control. Andrew is sharing mowing contact information and that the TFSC wants to not mow the knotweed currently in the field.
- b.** There have been some reports of increased dog feces out on the trails lately. Andrew has put out signs at Shaw asking pet owners to pick up after their pets.
- c.** Paine Mountain Trail Race is scheduled from Sept 27th . The race will go to the summit this year. Michael McGrane, Norwich CC coach, is planning and coordinating the event. This will be the third year of the race, but the first year it returns to the summit.

VIII. ADJOURN 7:30 pm, motion by Russ, 6-0