

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT TOWN FOREST  
STEWARDSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE  
Minutes of November 17, 2020**

- I. **ROLL CALL:** In attendance were John Sears, Colin Bright, Debbie Zuaro, Lydia Petty, Russ Barrett, Nelson Hoffman, and Brad Johnson.
- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Dave Packie began the meeting agenda with a read through of his submitted Draft Town Forest Recreation Master Plan. The name of the document is not set in stone, and Dave reiterated that this draft only applies to recreational/trail use in the non-winter season. There is no mention of winter activities in the document. Highlights of his draft included an emphasis on ongoing annual trail maintenance. One of Dave's efforts with this plan is to recognize potential use conflicts between users moving at different speeds, uphill and downhill, and separate the trails used for different activities to minimize conflicts on trails. He also emphasized the need to reach out to adjacent private land owners soon to provide them with our vision for the overall management of the TF and how trails that cross their land are to be managed by the TFSC. He noted that this plan may lead to up to a 10% increase in trail area, as well as further limitations on recreation in certain sensitive zones. There was no further discussion of the plan, as the matter will be taken up by the appropriate TFSC Working Groups (WGs).
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 10, 2020:** Brad moved that the minutes be approved, and Colin seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.
- IV. **COMMITTEE NOTES/UPDATES:** Dave reported that NU was using TF land over the past weekend, despite telling the public they would not be doing so. Russ remarked that the boundary markers and flagging along the TF boundary with NU have been removed. Lydia reported that the NRRP is close to finishing their report, and it will be presented on 11/24/20. She will get a copy to the TFSC for use in our planning going forward.
- V. **OPEN MEETING LAW RULES:** Colin noted at this point that those NCC members present at the meeting make up a "super quorum" of NCC members on the TFSC. Technically, this is not allowed under Open Meeting Law rules unless the meeting was announced ahead of time. As a result, Deb signed off to remedy this issue. She asked how we make it possible for other NCC members to sit in on TFSC meetings. This

question was not answered and needs further research. Laura Hill-Eubanks might be the one to answer this question. Lydia stated that overall, the TFSC has too many NCC members unless we change the number of members mandated for the TFSC. Brad agreed to check with Deb about getting the NCC/SB to approve a change in the number of committee members. Russ added that small WG with 2-3 members would work for our needs as long as the overall committee member number was 7 rather than 5. There was some discussion here about what the next immediate steps would be for each of the three WGs designated in the next discussion section. Nelson argued that any immediate steps need to include further discussion of conservation in the TF, not just recreational use. Also, all agreed that we need to agree on some basic GPS mapping details before work can move forward with any of the WGs.

- VI. WORKING GROUPS:** Three smaller working groups were formed. WG #1 will be Forest Management/Access – Russ, Brad. WG #2 will be Master Recreational/Trail Plan – Nelson, Lydia. WG #3 will be Education/Special Use – Russ, Colin. Each WG will have the ability to ask non-committee members who have special expertise to join the appropriate WG. Each WG needs to establish a priority list. Nelson and Lydia will work on outreach to adjacent landowners, with help from Brad. Nelson argued that we have a stewardship mandate in the Town Forest Management Plan, and this should be the backdrop for all the future planning work. All agreed that each WG needs to take and publish notes, so that they can be provided if anyone asks to see the work documented as part of the public record.
- VII. TERM LIMITS:** All members of the TFSC should be term limited, as the NCC members are (4 years for NCC). Brad agreed to ask Deb about this issue as part of the discussion about increasing the number of TFSC members to 7. The language here needs to be flexible – “up to 7 TFSC members”.
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** Lydia moved that the meeting be adjourned and Brad seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.