

Wilmington Trail Committee
Minutes for August 15, 2024

Members present: Bob Fisher, Chair; Joanne Yankura, Julie Koehler, Carol Bois
Alternates present: Alan Baker
Absent: Jeff Menges
Guests: Gretchen Havreluk, Economic Development Consultant; Joe Saladino,
Saladino Property Maintenance, Inc.

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Bob Fisher

Scheduled Agenda:

1. Changes to the agenda: none
2. Public comments: none
3. Approval of June 13th minutes: Joanne made a motion to approve the June 13th minutes. Carol seconded. All in favor.
4. Financial Report: Carol reviewed the W&S July invoices for the HT&W project. Permitting related invoices will be reimbursed through the VOREC grant and the others paid out of the 1% HT&W allocation. A WTC financial spreadsheet obtained from Jessica was reviewed with separate columns for "Trails", "Donations", and the HT&W 1% allocations w/ W&S invoice entries. Discussion included working with Jessica and Christine on improving the spreadsheet details in order to facilitate WTC's financial accountability.
Action: Carol will follow up with Jessica D. and Christine R. to track and report monthly WTC account balances via spreadsheet, request more detailed entry information such as dates, and obtain a list of past WTC donors and donation amounts.
5. HT&W construction bid award: Gretchen reported that the HT&W RFP resulted in a sole bid from Saladino Property Maintenance, Inc. Based on W&S estimated costs, the bid is strong and very favorable. Questions regarding how the RFP bid was structured relative to prioritizing project segment work were addressed and discussed. The current funding will cover the base bid (segments 3,4 & 6), the parking area (Town to be reimbursed for work), permitting costs, and the W&S project oversight fee. After questions and discussion concluded, Carol made a motion to recommend that the Selectboard accept the Saladino HT&W project bid. Joanne seconded. All in favor. Mr. Saladino described concerns and considerations impacting the decision to begin construction in fall vs. spring such as winter weather plus still pending issuance of the wetlands permit and VDHP final comment.
Action: Mr. Saladino was congratulated on WTC's supportive bid recommendation which will be presented to the Selectboard at their next meeting on Tuesday, August 20th.
6. Status of trailhead sign order: deferred until September meeting.
7. Consider joining Vermont Trails and Greenways Council: (VTGC): Joanne referenced VTGC's webpage information to provide an overview of VTGC's mission, various resources, and its VOREC grant award in partnership with several other organizations working to develop a VT trail accessibility hub. WTC's RFP was advertised on the VTGC website and two lists of trail building businesses were obtained from Sharon Plumb, the VTGC program manager, for soliciting HT&W project bids. Carol mentioned an upcoming two day, VTGC-sponsored educational symposium. After investigating the cost of membership and some

discussion, Bob made a motion to approve up to \$150 to pay for WTC's VTGC membership. Joanne seconded. All in favor.

Action: Alan will complete the VTGC membership registration form on behalf of WTC. Once an invoice is received, Alan will forward the invoice to Jessica for payment.

8. Velomont Trail Project: Joanne reviewed information gleaned from the Public Open House project presentation by the USDA Forest Service, GMNF, Manchester Ranger District. The trail will extend from Canada to Massachusetts. While aimed at primarily mountain bikers, it is intended to be multi-use. The route will connect communities by linking existing mountain biking trails and newly constructed trail routes. The Velomont trail section in the Manchester Ranger District extends from Dorset to Wilmington. After viewing maps available on the project web link, Bob suggested contacting Jason Pietrzak, the Project team lead, with the idea of connecting the Velomont Trail Wilmington terminus to the Valley Trail via an old Route 9/Forest Service connection.

Action: Bob will contact Jason Pietrzak with a WTC comment and request that the Velomont trail Scoping work include creating a connection to the Valley Trail at the Wilmington terminus via a former, unused Forest Service/old Route 9 connection.

9. Steel hiker art piece: Alan explained that a few pieces of steel art created for the wall along Beaver Street have not sold. The hiker is being offered to WTC. Questions were asked about the conditions of the "gift", e.g., is a donation expected/required? Various ideas were discussed as to potential uses and siting locations. Bob suggested first asking how/if WTC might accept the art piece as a gift, i.e., as a donation to the Town, and proceed from there.

Action: Alan will inquire about the terms/conditions of acquiring the steel hiker artwork, ask if donating to the Town is possible, and report back at the September WTC meeting.

10. Trail Work Priorities:

1) Bob mentioned that he'd met with a landowner adjacent to the Valley Trail who reported theft and vandalism of some personal property; he wants the trail rerouted away from the property boundary. Bob proposed approaching the adjacent landowner, Schitts Creek, LLC, about possibly rerouting that section of the trail onto their property.

Action: Bob will contact the landowner of Schitts Creek, LLC and request/discuss permission to reroute a section of the Valley Trail onto their property.

2) Joanne showed photos of the repaired bridge on the Primitive Trail that was completed by the landowners, Nick & Chris Evans. Four sections of large, flat stones were installed and look to be a durable, navigable rebuild solution.

Action: Joanne will extend a formal thank you to the Evans on behalf of WTC.

3) Joanne reported that one plank on HT&W boardwalk has a new, sizable hole.

Action: Joanne will add replacing the plank to the Google Drive, WTC "to do" list.

4) Lake Raponda Loop Trail: Alan mentioned a few trees down; otherwise in good shape.

Action: Alan offered to cut and remove downed trees on the Loop Trail.

5) Shearer Hill: Bob reported that the trail is cleared of trees but should be a top priority for spring trimming/widening in 2025.

Action: Joanne will add Shearer Hill trimming to WTC "to do" list for early 2025.

6) Chimney Hill kiosk: Joanne mentioned the idea of touching base with Travis Wendall to complete the kiosk repair which is temporarily being stored at the Town Garage facility.

Action: Joanne or Jeff will contact Travis and inquire about plans to complete the repair.

11. Work Bee: Bob suggested tentatively scheduling the Valley Trail reroute for the **next work bee** scheduled on **Thursday, September 5th at 5 pm.**

Action: Bob will contact the Schitts Creek, LLC landowner and request permission to

reroute the Valley Trail at their property. If unable to contact owner and obtain a determination by 9/5, the work bee will focus on general maintenance along the Valley Trail. Meet up location, tools needed, and planned task(s) will be communicated prior to 9/5 and pending the outcome from Bob's discussion.

The meeting concluded at 7:37 pm.

Next Meeting:
September 12th at the Town Offices

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Yankura