

Draft Minutes

Landgrove Selectboard Meeting- 7/24/2014 6:00pm

Landgrove Town Hall, 88 Landgrove Road, Landgrove VT

Attendance: Greg Eckhardt, Jeremiah Evarts, John Ogden, Andrea Ogden, Chrystal Cleary, Seth Bigelow (Conservation Commission), Kyle Mason (Benn. County. Forester), Alison Langsdale (BCRC), and Public: Michael Morfit, Christine Morfit, Leslie Kimball, Fritz Mills & James Mills

- Alison Langsdale from BCRC spoke about working together to create a Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) plan for Landgrove, which facilitates FEMA processes in the event of a disaster. The Selectmen unanimously approved the creation of a PDM working with Alison Langsdale of BCRC.
- Treasurer Andrea Ogden proposed that we set a meeting in August to set the tax rate, since we are still waiting for the appeals process to finalize. The Selectmen set the meeting for Tuesday August 5th at 8am. Chrystal will warn the meeting.
- Conservation Commission/Comfort Forest- Seth read a statement:
 - a. Public land should serve a public purpose.
 - b. The Selectboard had tasked the Cons.Comm. with the task of identifying the condition of the Town Forests and ID developable benefits of each.
 - c. The Cons.Comm. asked Kyle Mason to walk through and prepare a Resource Assessment.
 - d. There is no management plan at this time, and the decision of whether to manage and if so how, will come at the direction of the Selectboard.
 - e. There is a need for greater and improved communication with the community.
- Kyle presented his resource assessment, which describes 2 forest types in the Comfort Forest and the composition of each. Overall the forest contains same-aged trees with lots of overstory, but very little mid- and understory. The Forest has reached a condition in which it can't improve on it's own without natural disturbances felling trees. A controlled, selective harvest could improve forest health and habitat.
- The Selectmen outlined the differences between Pitcher Forest (planted crop, liability of Town Forest trees falling on Priscilla's house) and Comfort Forest:
 - a. Responsibility of ownership is management
 - b. Maybe make no plan- there's plenty of other habitat?
 - c. Town takes a financial hit when land is taken off the tax rolls.
 - d. Pitcher Forest needs some cleanup before making any plans for any other properties.
 - e. But- since there was no plan in place for Pitcher Forest, we had to act quickly to work on it when the trees began to affect abutters. A plan – even a 'review it in 5 years' kind of plan would give us awareness of the condition of the Forest and a guide for the future.

Michael Morfit spoke for the neighbors of Comfort Forest- Concern about procedures and plans, and about communication- to this point communication with neighbors has been accidental. In the absence of information, neighbors looked for comparable situations and saw Pitcher Forest, which looks rough now, and has a public path in it- both of which the neighbors

would be unhappy with. The neighbors would like a more formal information flow, and to be apprised of the process and procedures if anything is to be done in Comfort Forest.

John Ogden explained that there has been no plan, nothing to communicate because we are 'nowhere near' the creation of a plan, or even determining if there should be anything done. Only an inventory and assessment of the Town's Forest has been done and it's health reported to the Selectmen this evening.

Jerry asked Kyle to complete an assessment on the third town forest, Evarts Forest, next.

- Flagpole Update – The flagpole has been delivered. Chrystal will call Cameron Chalmers about contracting the work of pouring the base and installing the pole.
- Cemetery Improvements – Stone wall is still being built, looks good!
- Cameron Chalmers Equipment- Cameron has received his permit from Weston to move his equipment there.
- LEOP forms- Allison will help shepherd us through that form at a future meeting.
- Pitcher Forest – Anna Dibble's letter re: the memorial plaque. Seth has reached out to Anna, apologizing for not vetting the text through the family (he and Monk Ogden, who knew Lynn Pitcher, worked on the creation of the plaque) and offered that if she would compose something she felt better about for the plaque, he will have that carved on the other side of the same slab of marble and display that side.
- The Selectboard unanimously accepted Chrystal Cleary's resignation from the Conservation Commission. Seth Bigelow spoke to formally recognize Chrystal's service to the Cons. Comm. for two years and commended her love of the outdoors and Natural History.
- Other business:
 - a. Chrystal and Steve got the Better Back Roads final paperwork completed and sent in to Alan May.
 - b. The BCA decisions for the Tax Appeals have been completed and were mailed out Tuesday.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:52pm

Respectfully submitted, Chrystal Cleary Town Clerk