



## ***TOWN OF WAITSFIELD***

### **CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

**Monday January 16, 2023; 6:30 PM**

#### **MINUTES**

Members Present: James Donaldson, Leo Laferriere, Bruno Grimaldi, Bob Cook, Curt Lindberg

Members Absent: Phil Huffman, Ted Joslin, Chris Loomis, PJ Telep

Public in attendance: None

Lindberg opens meeting at 6:45 PM. Cook was volunteered to take the minutes of the meeting.

Review and Approval of 12/19/22 Minutes: MOTION by Laferriere; seconded by Grimaldi; MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Phase 1 Scrag Mountain Trail Contractor Recommendation: Donaldson reported that two proposals were received and that lowest bidder, Apex Trailworks, had been notified of same in order to secure scheduling. The other bidder will be notified shortly. Apex's proposal was for \$24,250 to be performed during the summer of 2023. Grimaldi indicated funds for the project would come from the Scrag Mountain Stewardship Reserve, Fund 26. Donaldson moved to seek permission from the Selectboard to enter into a contract with Apex Trailworks of Braintree, Vermont not to exceed \$24,250 payable from the Scrag Mountain Stewardship Reserve Fund. The motion was seconded by Grimaldi. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. Donaldson will present this to the Selectboard on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Preparations for Subsequent Phases of Scrag Mountain Trail Improvements: Lindberg raised the question as to when we should start thinking about the subsequent trail work. Donaldson suggested that in all likelihood Phases 2 & 3 may be faced with some Act 250 permitting requirements. He pointed out that he thought the Sinuosity design contract contained the requirement to flag the trail alignments in the field for these phases. This could require a change order to the Sinuosity's contract. Discussion to be continued in future monthly meetings.

Tri-Town Conservation Commission Matters:

Wildlife Corridor Community Meeting: Warren CC has taken the lead to schedule a community education program at the Big Picture on February 16, 2023 on wildlife corridors; primary references for the discussion will be the Warren and Waitsfield wildlife corridor mapping.

Tri-Town Conservation Committee Meeting: Lindberg reported that a Tri-Town meeting of the Conservation Committees had been discussed among the commission chairs. Consensus is that the meeting should include only the commissions' members. Grimaldi volunteered to pursue coordination of such a meeting and rough out an agenda. The agenda should include time to talk about what each commission has been working on, and whether there are topics the three town could or should work more closely on. Probably best to assume the discussion will be via Zoom.

Grant Application to VT Fish and Wildlife: Lindberg raised the subject of pursuing a grant application with Vermont Fish and Wildlife for a Watershed Grant to accelerate invasive species efforts in the Mad River Valley. He indicated representatives of the Warren and Fayston Conservation Commissions had indicated support for the request. The maximum grant could be \$9,900 to be shared among the three towns. Grimaldi moved that the Commission seek the Selectboard's permission to pursue such a grant. Motion seconded by Laferriere. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tardy Property Management Plan: Discussion deferred until the next meeting.

Financial Matters:

Grimaldi indicated that voices approved at the last meeting have been paid.

Grimaldi indicated that a payment of \$6,279 had been received on the Scrag Mountain sugaring lease; this reflects an increase of 130 additional taps.

Grimaldi queried the status of a down payment on some survey work. The Selectboard has approved the expense, expense account TBD. Grimaldi moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,500 related to a proposal dated January 5, 2023 from Short Surveying Inc. that required a \$1,500 deposit; Seconded by Cook; MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business:

Cook raised the subject of the need for some routine drainage work needed in the lower reaches of the Gateway section, and along the VYCC trail. The concept of requesting Apex to undertake this effort when on site this summer was briefly discussed. Discussion to be continued.

Laferriere introduced the concept of using biodegradable mats for use in knotweed management. He anticipates evaluating available the products during the next month and will report on this at a later meeting.

Next meetings of the Commission are scheduled for 2/20/23 and 3/20/23.

Executive Session:

MOTION to go into executive session by Laferriere; seconded by James;  
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION to come out of executive session by Grimaldi; Seconded by James;

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commission comes out of executive session with no action taken but further discussion with Selectboard on confidential real estate matter to occur.

MOTION to adjourn by Grimaldi; Seconded by Laferriere; MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.  
Adjournment: 7:38 PM.