

MINUTES
Underhill Conservation Commission
July 11, 2016
Underhill Town Hall

Present: Karen McKnight, Amy Golodetz, Betsy Chapek, Dan Steinbauer, Daphne Tanis

Absent: Nancy McRae, Peter Hiskes, Laurie Graham, Pat Lamphere

Welcome and Opening Remarks: Official meeting was delayed until 7:00 pm. Karen reviewed the agenda and welcomed all. Karen suggested the meeting informal until we had a quorum. Daphne offered to take notes. Betsy arrived at 7:03 and the formal meeting got underway.

Public Comment: No person(s) were present for public comment.

Approval Minutes: June 13, 2016 minutes were edited and discussed and later approved in the meeting.

Discussion:

Ash Tree Inventory Project and Planning

Dan overviewed the Inventory project. He shared meeting with landowners, and discussing the project and noted their enthusiasm.

UCC members discussed the EAB Survey Project's success thus far. The group is in agreement that we have; 1.) established a methodology for conducting surveys, 2.) successfully communicated, and educated landowners encountered during first surveys, 3.) developed a plan for educating other UCC members and interested community members and, 4.) should the EAB infestation reach Vermont., UCC has a plan for working with the state.

The group worked collectively to edit and complete article to be posted by the town regarding the UCCs ongoing EAB Tree Survey project. The articles intent is to introduce the UCC project to land owners, make fellow Underhill citizens aware UCC members will be around town, and help educate and encourage other town's people to join the effort.

All concurred; it is appropriate to have all UCC FPF postings and communications be approved and posted by the town administration.

Next Ash tree EAB survey workshop is scheduled for Monday, July 25th at 7:00 a.m. Plans to meet on New Road by the Town Garage near the metal gate.

Brooks and Crane Brook Trail Signage

Karen suggested it would be nice to replace the “Brook” signs as well.

Amy and Dan have identified 3 Signs to be replaced; that are situated at New Road, Fuller Road and at the Irish Settlement Gate.

The Additional Signs we would like to create identifying brooks and rivers are respectively; Mill Brook, Clay Brook, Browns River and Roaring Brook. Amy has offered to lead in getting the estimates. Betsy will contact Yuri Bihun about the sign company originally used.

Once estimates and a vendor(s) have been identified, Karen will present to Selectman.

Invasive Species Land Management

Amy updated UCC members with her on-going efforts working with the COVERTS group to develop an Invasive Species/Land Management Workshop. Amy is seeking a COVERTS land owner from Underhill. A three-day COVERTS training available in Castleton; Amy will look in to cost and availability for other attendees.

Dan shared information about the ‘Tree Stewards’ convention. This year’s convention is planned for October, the fee is \$25. Many members at meeting expressed an interest in attending.

Dan will get back to members with more detailed information as it becomes available.

Ed Moore Park

Amy mentioned, a better work effort than a gazebo would be nature signs at Ed Moore Park. All attending members agreed with Karen that building a Gazebo is not within the UCC’s purview and would be an inappropriate use of funds.

Open discussion continued about UCCs possible plans for the Ed Moore Park, stream and picnic area. Some ideas included: Educational Signs by Picnic area and possibly developing a ‘Storybook ‘ group of signs similar to that at the Essex reservoir.

Amy, Betsy, Karen and Dan discussed ideas regarding Invasive Species Clean-up of the area. Karen would like the town to help by providing a vehicle to hold the plant material pulled. Also there is a concern for proper disposal of the plant material.

It was suggested we plan an Underhill Community Clean-up day. The first part of the August 8th meeting members will review and access the work effort.

Other

Black Bear

Daphne brought the idea forward for educating residents about living with Black Bears. Numerous reports within the community ,such as; folks feeding the Bears, Bears getting into garbage on decks and in garages, Bears taking chickens, no fear of humans, etc., have appeared on FPF and been rumored.

Daphne has concerns for both the Bears' safety and the safety of Underhill residents.

Daphne's Black Bear project proposal may include the following:

1. Have Vermont Wildlife and Fish speaker Forrest Hammond, or other, present at a Public Meeting in September 2016.
2. Involve the Land Trust folks in effort; both Underhill and Jericho.
3. Make available the appropriate Black Bear –'Be Bear Aware' pamphlets at Town Hall and other spots.
4. Provide ongoing information to the town as available and appropriate.

Betsy has offered to help Daphne with efforts. Group suggested contacting Livy Strong. Daphne will follow up with plans at next meeting

Next Ash Tree Inventory Workshop - Monday 7-25-17

Meet at 7:00 a.m. on New Road by Town Garage. Bring your tree books, binoculars, cameras, and water.

Adjournment: The motion to adjourn was moved by Amy and seconded by Karen. The meeting was officially adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, August 8, 2016, 6:30 p.m., Underhill Town Hall

Respectfully submitted, Daphne Tanis, 7-11-16 **DRAFT**