

**Land Stewardship Subcommittee  
Town Hall Chambers – 8 Newmarket Road  
Meeting Minutes for November 8, 2023**

**Members Attending:** Ann Welsh, Jim Lawson, Gale Carey, Ted Howard (for Mike Everngam), John Carroll and Marty Gorham.

**Attending via Zoom:** Mike Drooker.

**Absent:** Larry Brickner-Wood, John Nachilly, and Mike Everngam.

**Also attending:** Sara Callaghan, Todd Selig, Rachel Gasowski, and Richard Reine

1. The Meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Ann Welsh.
2. The meeting agenda was unanimously approved.
3. The meeting minutes for the June 14, 2023 meeting approved with comments.
4. The LSSC goals were presented by Ann Welsh and Jim Lawson. The goals were unanimously approved as presented.
5. The findings from the stewardship working group questionnaires for Jackson Landing and Thompson Forest were presented by Gale Carey.
6. Plans to update the Doe Farm forest management plan were presented by Ted Howard.

7. Public Works Director Updates:

Rich Reine discussed some of the planning that is taking place for the removal of the Mill Pond Dam. The dam removal should occur sometime during the summer/fall of 2024.

Rich provided an update on the City of Portsmouth water line project at Wagon Hill Farm. The costs for repairs are much higher than anticipated, so the City is rethinking how best to approach the project. Updates will be provided to the LSSC as planning progresses.

8. Land Stewardship Coordinator Updates:

On Monday 11/6/2023, Sara Callaghan held a training session for trail steward volunteers. There were approximately 14 people that attended in person and 3 online. Volunteers will help maintain the trails, will report their trail walks to Sara, and will advise if there are issues on the trails that need attention.

A proposal from Jeremy Howland, Ph.D. to survey lichen in the Longmarsh Preserve, as part of a thesis project, was presented, discussed, and unanimously approved. The LSSC members ask that Mr. Howland obtain and comply with applicable state requirements, and have a written agreement with the town.

Pike Property

Sara is working on estimates of the costs to comply with the land stewardship plan for the Pike property. This includes mowing and control of invasive plant species.

Some encroachment onto the Pike property by abutters has been observed. Sara is working with the abutters to clarify the property lines and resolve the issue.

Sara suggested that the kiosk at the Thompson Forest be updated to include the Pike property.

#### New England Cottontails

Sara met with representatives from the NH Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife, UNH Extension, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to discuss the status of, and possible funding to promote and manage the habitat for cottontails at Wagon Hill North and Thompson Forest.

#### Longmarsh Preserve

Sara is working on a proposal, which includes both scope and costs, to improve or replace some of the bridges and boardwalks in the Longmarsh Preserve and along the Sweet Trail.

#### White Trail

Sara is working to keep the white trail in the West Foss Farm, which passes through multiple owner properties, open and accessible.

#### 9. Parks and Recreation Director Updates:

Rachel Gasowski met with UNH professors that are working on a parks and playground assessment. Work on this assessment is just beginning, so there will be updates in the future.

#### 10. Other Updates:

Jim Lawson indicated that a budget has been presented to the community and town council. Jim feels that the proposed budget is responsive to suggestions made by Sara and the LSSC. Public and council discussion and approval of funding is pending.

#### 11. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

The next meeting is planned for Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 8:30 am in the Town Hall Chambers.