

These minutes were approved at the March 24, 2023 meeting.

MINUTES

Trustees of the Trust Funds Meeting
February 24, 2023
Council Chambers, Town Hall
8:30 AM

Members Present: Mike Everngam - Chair, Bill Cote, Craig Seymour—Members; Tom Bebbington, Ted Howard – Alternates

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Sara Callaghan – Land Stewardship Coordinator

- I. The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.
- II. There was no public input.
- III. Approval of Agenda. Chair Everngam moved to amend the Agenda by adding a discussion on Tree Farm designation for Doe Farm. Bill Cote seconded. Passed
- IV. Approval of Minutes: Chair Everngam moved, Craig Seymour seconded to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2023.
- V. Old Business:

A. Update on Doe Farm/Land Stewardship Sub-Committee (LSSC).

Chair Everngam distributed a draft on multiple Town properties needing surveys per request of the LSSC. Everngam stated that his opinion was that Wagon Hill Farm was most important especially due to the proposed Portsmouth water line construction. Sara Callaghan said that this matter was brought up at the last Wagon Hill Farm Water Line meeting. She then explained some of the surveys and bounds of Wagon Hill.

Discussion moved to Jackson's Landing where the Everngam's draft indicated a high priority due to the Mill Pond Dam deconstruction. Sara also mentioned a boundary controversy that needed a resolution.

Ted Howard indicated his priorities of Jackson's Landing and Wagon Hill Farm.

Next discussed was Doe Farm and Chair Everngam indicated that most of the boundaries were defined save for the LaRoche Farm boundary. Sara will double check this boundary line.

Section X of Doe Farm is a small landlocked piece west of the railroad tracks where a survey is not a priority.

The Stolworthy Wildlife Sanctuary was discussed and it was agreed that a formal survey likely was done in gifting the plot to the Town.

B. Discussion on Tree Farm designation for Doe Farm.

Chair Everngam said that Doe Farm had been a certified tree farm for many years. Around 2020, it came up for renewal and due to the cost associated with the renewal, town administration decided not to renew. Chair Everngam asked if the Trustees could pay for it and

discussion did not proceed. Sara asked if the Tree Farm designation could be renewed and it was stated that the Doe Farm budget is constrained due to cost of invasives removal work. Sara stated she received a letter from NH Tree Farm dated last August about renewal. She called the director for clarification and was told not to worry about the date, that it's a low-key process and the Trustees have time. Sara also called Charlie Moreno, forester, about updating the Doe Farm management plan that was last done in 2000. Charlie recommended a new plan over an addendum to the existing plan. Sara requested 2 estimates from Moreno for a new plan and for an addendum.

Craig Seymour asked what is gained by having a Tree Farm designation? Ted Howard explained that the American Tree Farm system is a 3rd party to determine the level of management. It is also a way to communicate to the citizens that "we're doing it well." For example, a timber harvest from a Tree Farm designee can be certified as sustainably harvested. Howard indicated that the American Tree Farm system is currently undergoing LEED certification.

Sara said that SELT (Southeast Land Trust) certifies its properties as Tree Farms as it can be educational for the general public as well as individual land owners considering a Tree Farm designation.

Tom Bebbington asked about the cost. It was noted that there is no cost to enroll in the system and the cost is for the management plan. Chair Everngam said the last plan in 2000 was around \$1,500 and could now be \$2,000. Bebbington said an argument can be made that the 23 year old management plan may not be accurate as to the current status.

Ted Howard inquired if the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) could cost share given the trust arrangement of Doe Farm relative to the town. Sara indicated she would look into it.

Chair Everngam asked about trustee's sense on moving forward on the Tree Farm designation. Seymour indicated he was swayed by Howard's discussion about an independent 3rd party validation. Bill Cote was also in favor. Chair Everngam indicated that the Trustees will move forward on this matter.

C. Update on Cemetery Committee.

Craig Seymour said there was little to report. There was a plot sale in January and also a request for a refund for a cremains grave as the deceased is now interred at the Veterans Cemetery. Seymour also received a request for a cremains burial on the upper left side of the cemetery bordering The Cottages.

Discussion ensued about the removal of large pine trees along Technology Drive as part of the new water pump station. They have been identified as needing removal. Seymour stated that perhaps only one tree is on cemetery property and the rest were on town property. Howard stated his preference that native trees or shrubs should be used as replacements. Callaghan indicated that in her discussions with DPW Director she believes that will be the case. Chair Everngam indicated that the contract calls to re-establish a screen. Bill Cote indicated his opposition to a line of arborvitaes or similar as they are unnatural looking.

VI. New Business

A. Activity/Expenditure Requests:

Chair Everngam had received a bill from Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) for \$5,360 for invasive species removal done in 2022. He moved approval of full payment and Seymour seconded. Passed.

Chair Everngam spoke about the RCCD proposal dated January 26, 2023 for \$3995 for this year's invasive species treatment and removal. There was general discussion about what should be done and where. Everngam noted that in the northern section by a small body of water is a large buckthorn that is likely a seed bed. He asked if RCCD could include this as part of their estimate that was to treat the area from the landing area/cellar hole toward the Lamprey as it is accessible due to the previous timber harvest. Sara mentioned that RCCD wanted some assurances that continued monitoring of the north side would be needed. Sara believes that other funding could be secured for continued invasives treatment. She said buckthorn seeds are viable for 2-5 years and that stumps can resprout. Essentially, there are 2 choices: hit the lower areas as suggested by RCCD estimate or get rid of the seed stock in the northern area. Sara prefers to address the seed stock in the northern area. Ted Howard said this is a long run issue despite what is done. Buckthorn is pervasive and birds will likely still carry seeds from elsewhere. He favors hitting the seed source in the northern area. Sara suggested that volunteers could hit the lower sections with hand clipping and pulling. Howard said that UNH has an annual Buckthorn Blitz and may be of assistance.

Discussion ensued over the NRCS Effectiveness Report where the percentage of dead stems vs partial stems is compared. Howard said a better report would be to determine last year's treatment.

Chair Everngam asked for a better evaluation in Spring by RCCS of the seed bank. He wants a better definition by RCCS of the seed bed.

B. Monthly MS-9 Spreadsheet.

Chair Everngam stated that Deb Ahlstrom was still working on the MS-9.

C. Discussion adding Name of Veteran to Viet Nam Memorial.

Chair Everngam handed out a draft of a letter to Administrator Selig after he had met with Selig. Trustees offered several suggestions in reordering some of the bullet items. It is proposed that a trust fund be established to allow private donations to be accepted. Bebbington asked if this trust fund could also include the upkeep of the park in general. May need to redefine and separate the two points.

D. Reports or issues brought forward by Trustees.

Chair Everngam recognized Bill Cote for his 9 years of service as he is not running for re-election.

VII. Adjourn.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM. The next regular business meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2023 at 8:30 AM at the Town Offices.

Approved: /s/ Michael H. Everngam
Michael H. Everngam

Date _____