

Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee

Minutes

Thursday July 16, 2026

Call to Order – Time: 5:37

- Committee Members Present: Chris Russo, Janette Shaffer, Jim Deshler, Ryan Horvath, Susan McDowell
- Committee Members Absent: Amanda Gustin (council liaison)
- Others Present: Greg Rouleau (member in limbo), Dave Watson (Sno-bees), Ann Severance (neighbor, user of CP)

Adjustments to Agenda:

- Motion by Janette S: Move discussion of Wolf Tree Trail brook crossing to after approval of minutes. Seconded by Jim D. Vote: All in Favor.

Agenda Items:

Approval of Minutes: May 21, 2026

- Motion by Chris R: approve May 21, 2026 minutes with typo fixed, Jim will fix and resubmit edited minutes to City. Seconded by Ryan H. Vote: All in favor.

Stream Crossing at Wolf Tree Trail:

- Vertically oriented rocks at stream crossing and next to waterbars on Wolf Tree Trail are an issue for the VAST groomer. Guest Dave Watson drives the groomer. Is asking for removal of the stones next to the brook and water bars (one located south of the brook, three north of the brook). All present are in agreement that a bridge is not a feasible option in this location.
- Motion by Chris R: Committee will ask Zac of Apex Trail Works to provide a proposal and quote for potential solutions to the waterbar issues.
 - Discussion: All agreed that Dave Watson will be looped into the discussion with Zac so he can meet with Zac on site and provide feedback regarding the needs of VAST groomer.
 - Seconded by Ryan H. Vote: All in favor.
- After approval of motion, Chris R pointed out the importance of adequate snow cover before grooming occurs. When grooming occurred at the beginning of '25-'26 VAST season, there was only 6-7" of snow and this caused damage to CP trails and made the vertical rocks more of an issue. Dave said they normally wouldn't groom in that situation, but the driver was new and didn't know where he was going. Snobeas will ensure the driver is trained and aware of the need for additional snow coverage before grooming in CP in future years.

Trail Maintenance:

- Ann Severance, a CP user and neighbor, stopped by and inquired about the "sticks in the trail". The CP committee has utilized downed brush to close un-sanctioned trails that have been created as cut throughs between trails - Ann stated this "looks terrible". Members of the committee explained to Ann that multiple cut through trails should not be created and the 2025 CP Trail Assessment suggested we close/block them so trails can revegetate. Unsanctioned trails create additional work for the CP Committee to maintain and can lead to unnecessary erosion and compaction of soil. It was suggested Ann contact a member of the Committee to get this discussion item added to the agenda of a future meeting to learn more.

ERSA Grant Subcommittee (2026 Trail Project & Semprebon Fund Request):

- Chris attended a recent City council meeting to request \$25k from the Semprebon Fund to replenish the committee's funds. This was approved unanimously by the City Council.
- Jim D will provide an update to the 2026 trail project at the end of the meeting with an onsite visit to the proposed bridge crossing.

Membership:

- Committee currently down to five members. We could have difficulty having a quorum in future.

- Emily is taking a step back to address a family situation, Chris plans to contact Emily about whether she plans to resign from the Committee or take a leave of absence.
- In the spring, Nicolas (City Manager) sent membership renewal forms to Chris, Emily, and Greg. Greg did not receive it and his membership on the committee has lapsed. He is planning to attend an upcoming City council meeting to get re-instated to the Committee.

City Support:

- Chris contacted the City about routine maintenance in the CP. They have been responsive.
- Chris shared an updated Barre City contact list with members of the CP.

Trail Maintenance:

- Owl Trail is becoming overgrown with buckthorn. Chris will be attempting to organize some trail work days.
- Motion by Chris R: Chris will ask the City to cut down the box elder and Norway maple trees at the entrance to the CP. Jim will flag any trees in this area that should be cut down. All wood will be left on site. Second: Ryan H. Vote: All in Favor.
- Motion by Chris R: Proceed with removal of Ford Family signs that are affecting tree growth, and any unnecessary 'no motorized vehicles' and 'no hunting' signs in consultation with the City of Barre and the Ford family. Second: Susan. Vote: All in favor.
- Discussion of adding an additional directional arrow at the trail junction of CP Loop and Owl Trail to improve signage. All agreed this would be a good idea. Chris has arrows.

Updates and Discussions:

Conservation & Access Advisory Group: No Update

Invasive Species Awareness Sub-Committee: Susan will be making a handout for a proposed 10/24 workshop.

Social Media: With Emily absent, this is on hold.

Snopees- Gift Certificate:

- Motion by Susan M: Give gift certificate to Joe for helping remove downed trees. Second: Ryan. Vote: All in favor.

2026 Trail Project (Site Visit):

- Jim met with Zac on site June 25, 2026. Zac will build a ~28' bridge, approach trails to the bridge, and a spur trail to the spring. The bridge will be similar to downstream crossing, but with three stringers and railings on both sides. Trail length built will be 100'.
- The committee will consider planting ferns and forest shrubs on the closed sections of trail after construction.
- Chris emphasized that no rocks shall be removed from the stonewall for construction.
- During the site visit, Zac asked if they could dig a ditch in the seep to the east of the proposed trail on adjoining property. The committee is in agreement that a ditch is not wanted.

4. Adjourn

- Motion by Jim D to adjourn at 7:25. Seconded: Susan.

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: Jim Deshler

2026 Meeting Dates:

September 17, 2026

November 19, 2026

Dates of Interest:

Invasive Workshop – October 24, 2026 (Rain date: October 25th)