

Minutes Cow Pasture Committee

Thursday – September 17, 2020

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Chris Russo-Fraysier, Tim Rapenzynski, Fab Pattison, Mike Perrigo, Jim Deshler
Non-Committee Members in Attendance: Steve Mackenzie, Sno Bee Members: Dave Watson- Director of Grooming Operations, Greg Rouleau-President.

- Call to order: 5:38 pm
- Adjustments to Agenda: Move Sno Bee Agenda item to the top of the Agenda and add 'Hunting Season' action item.
- Approval of minutes (7-16-2020): Moved–Tim. Seconded-Mike. All in favor -Motion passes
- Agenda Items:

Communication Policy Reading:

Updates: Members Chris Russo-Fraysier, Tim Rapenzynski and Jim Deshler walked the Pasture with Ken Benton on 9-12-2020. Field Notes attached.

Sno Bee Agenda Items:

- Pruning- Will be allowed on the VAST connector trail and will likely be done this winter using an ATV. Limbs must be cut to the main branch. Branches will be pulled into the woods and piled for wildlife habitat when there are many branches. If notified prior to pruning the Committee will post a notification on Facebook and Front Porch Forum informing City residents that the use of the ATV and pruning has been approved by the City.
- Trail Hazards and Stream Crossing- Concerns and issues from both the Sno Bee Club and Cow Pasture Committee were discussed. During the 2019-2020 season a hazardous trench was dug through the stream snow bridge that was created by the groomer for safe passage. The trench could have caused a serious accident and needed to be repaired by Mike Perrigo- Sno Bee/Cow Pasture Committee member (picture of trail damage provided). At the time of the incident the Committee posted information on Front Porch Forum (FPF) educating the public on snow bridges - an appropriate method of forming a stream bridge for winter travel. The previous year the Committee had to remove materials (fiber board and pallets) that were placed in the stream crossing to assist in travel across the stream- presumably by a rider that was entering the Pasture on an unapproved trail. All agreed that we cannot control the action of others and educational outreach is key. FPF, the Committee's web page and Sno Bee's Newsletter are appropriate venues.
- Gate: The 'Sugarwoods' Gate opening and closing is the responsibility of the SnoBees.
- Procedure for Reporting Incidents: Greg Rouleau requested that incidents be reported to the Washington County Sheriff (Bret Meyers) and to him. Contact information will be provided. Fab Pattison – discussed the Incident Reporting Form recommended for use by Tim Bombardier- Director of Public Safety; Barre City. The Form will be used for Dog incidents (see Dog Policy Update and attachments).
- Other Discussions not on the Agenda:
Sno Bee's Requests for Consideration:
 - 1) Construction of a Bridge at the stream crossing. Greg asked if the Committee would consider a bridge. The need for a significantly sized bridge was discussed. Chris mentioned that a bridge was considered in 2011 during a stream restoration project partially funded by a Clean and Clear Grant. Chris Russo-Fraysier – Committee Chair responded by stating that a bridge would be considered by the Committee. A Committee vote was not taken.

After Meeting Notes provided by Chris: In 2011 State of Vermont Water Quality and Vermont Youth Conservation Corp (VYCC) staff were on site to discuss solutions to the restoration of the badly

damaged stream crossing. It was determined that a bridge would need to very long and would be costly. The stream bank was stabilized, revegetated and a hardened stream crossing and apron of 4" crushed stone was recommended by VYCC staff. Stepping stones were added to the crossing. At that time we were told that any work completed would complement a future bridge crossing if determined to be necessary. A permit from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Watershed Management Division would be required.

- 2) Request to Groom Trail M1-3. The trail was previously groomed by the Sno-Bees. The junction at M2-3 is steep with poor visibility and is severely eroded. The trail was rerouted to avoid the junction and the steep section was rerouted and officially closed (brush installed) by a VYCC crew. The Committee does not want to reopen the trail due to safety, maintenance and trail restoration needs.

Trail Damage: Chris noted that the groomer has accidentally damaged important stonework at the stream crossing, signs at both VAST trail entrances and the gate at the 'Sugar Woods' entrance have been damaged, that is admittedly is very narrow. The stream crossing and gate damage required a significant amount of work on the part of a 2019 VYCC crew.

After Meeting Notes provided by Chris: One of the two signs has been reinstalled by Cow Pasture Co-Chair and Sno Bee member Mike Perrigo. The attachment to the 2019-2020 Sno Bee, City of Barre Agreement identifies the Club as being responsible for the repair of damage by the Groomer. A similar attachment will be provided for the 2020-2021 Agreement.

Updates:

Cow Pasture Logo- Tim provided a copy of the approved design modification discussed at the July Meeting and will contact individuals whose artwork and graphics have been incorporated into the logo. An official announcement of the Committee's choice will be made. The Committee will follow-up with a PR, Council presentation and possible display of all the entries. Motion to accept the redesigned logo -Tim, seconded-Chris. All in favor. Motion passes.

Dog Policy- Fab met with Chief Bombardier- Public Safety Department (Department) to discuss the dog walking policy, canine code of conduct, incident reporting policy and procedures that include public use of a form to report incidents. The Department has a form and requested that we use the existing Form. It was recommended that the Police contact the Committee and provide details of any report that may require action by the Committee and frequent or repeat incidents. Motion to accept the Canine Code of Contact, dog walking policy revisions approved at the July Meeting and the Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure/Form: Chris. Seconded Tim. All in favor – Motion Passes. The documents will be posted on the Barre City Cow Pasture Web site along with the Incident Reporting Form and posted on the Cow Pasture kiosk. The Committee will update Barre City Council on the updated policy.

Hunting: Hunting is not allowed in the City but adjoining private properties in Barre Town allow hunting. The Committee will post on the kiosk a sign used last year warning trail walkers that caution should be used.

Winter Fest – Discussion postponed due to lack of time.

Future Agenda Items – Initiatives: Chris will send an email a month prior to future meetings requesting Agenda items.

Initiatives that need a Committee Lead and work entailed:

- Conservation Zone Ordinances
- Replacing Maps
- Co-ordinate with groups, individuals and organizations identified in the Management Plan

Vacant Positions:

- Fund raising Coordinator/Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinator, and Natural Resource Manager.
5. Adjourn 6:50 p.m. Chris- Motion, seconded Fab Motion Passes to adjourn. Tim 2nd . Passed

2020 Meeting Schedule:

November 19, 2020

Time: 5:30 –6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location*: City Hall- Council Chambers

Important Dates/Meetings:

City Council Update- Steve Mackenzie to Schedule

Field Notes: 9-12-2020 Cow Pasture Walk with Ken Benton

In addition to providing information on native plants and birds Ken provided the following guidance and recommendations. This summary hopefully captures the main topics of discussion.

- A dead tree is leaning across the switch back trail. It is located close at the lower end of the trail. Steve offered to remove it.
- Gout weed- Very invasive plant located at the entrance of the Pasture and is spreading into the wetland area. Difficult to remove. Ken recommended trying to contain the edge to prevent it from spreading vs. removal. Line of defense may include heavy mulch or possible planting of Ostrich Fern that may compete with the weed.
- Wetland area has made a comeback and native plants are thriving. Amur Maples in wetland area should be cut and seeds removed- stump watched to ensure it does not resprout.
- Sno Bee trail grooming- Recommendation was to cut branches to the main stem rather than leave stubs, completely cut down invasive plants (i.e. Amur Maple), brush should be piled in woods for wildlife habitat. Along VAST Connection trail, Ken did not see an issue with pruning.
- Stream Crossing – large upright rock shoring up the north side of the stream was pulled to prevent the groomer from hitting it. Would be beneficial to add more stone to decrease the height of the upright stones that are shoring up the trail
- Chain-link fenced area to the west of M-1-2 needs to be investigated. Fence should not be removed until the reason for the installation is known. Jim will look at the State Hazardous Waste Maps and current and past City Public work directors may need to be contacted.
- Meadow Restoration- next year will have been 3 years since the meadow was brush hogged. Plan calls for every 3 -4 years. Remaining pines on the periphery of the meadow can remain. The Pine near the path can be cut.
- Ken created a 'Story Map' that highlighted the Cow Pasture and shared the link that is now on the Cow Pasture page of the City Website.
- Bluebird boxes should be cleaned in the spring...watch out for mice that may 'fly' out of the boxes when their winter nest is disturbed.
- There was a discussion on having a trail assessment. Purpose would be to assess current trail system and provide recommendations on rerouting current trails to provide for a gentle grade in some areas to help prevent erosion, expansion of existing trail system, trail access and adjoining property trails. The assessment would take into consideration the current management goals of the property as defined in the Management Plan.
- Large vines of Invasive Bitter Sweet found in the upper fern meadow by the sugar woods.
- Gate is in poor shape.
- Trailless area to the south of S18 was walked. Recommendations on trail rerouting of C6, C6-1 and C6-2 discussed.
- Focus of bittersweet removal area discussed. Lots of new shoots are sprouting. They can continue to be pulled but mowing may be the best approach at containing the growth once the major vines have been removed and there is access to the area.
- Trail to stream M2-2needs work. Water bars are too high and not well positioned and in one instance is funneling water on the trail rather than diverting it.
- Bridge over upper stream M2-2 trail would be impractical at the current site. Trail would have to be rerouted.

K9 Code of Conduct:

- Dogs are welcome in the Cow Pasture.
- City ordinance requires dogs to be under voice control or leashed at all times.
- Assume others don't want to interact with your dog.
- Carry a leash for each dog with you and be prepared to leash your dog(s) as needed.
- Dog owners must remove droppings from the trail; any plastic bags used must be carried out.
- All dogs must have a current rabies vaccine.
- All dogs must have a license for Barre City or be in good standing in the jurisdiction where they reside.

It is important to the Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee and City Staff that all visitors enjoy their time in the Cow Pasture and we ask everyone to do what they can to make this place enjoyable and safe to visit.

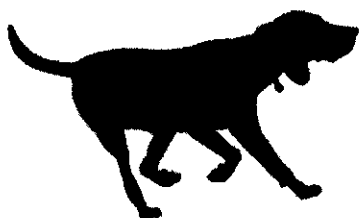
For more information please see the Barre City Cow Pasture Dog Walking Policy. Refer any incidents to the Barre City Police Department, 802-476-6613. Incident report forms are available at the Police Station.

Official Policy Update:

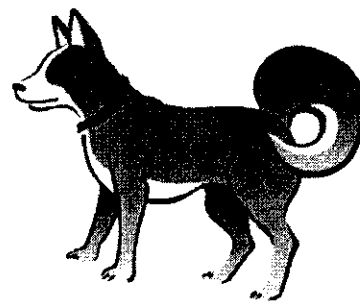
Domestic animals are permitted within the Cow Pasture boundaries provided they are under voice control or leashed by a responsible person. "Under voice control" means the animal must stop and come to the owner upon command and the animal is prevented from causing injury, damage or disturbances to other visitors at all times. Do not assume that other visitors want to interact with your animal. Carry a leash for each animal and be prepared to put them on a leash when approaching other visitors and as needed. Pick up after your animal. Droppings shall be immediately removed from the path and right of way by the person responsible or if droppings are put in plastic bags, they must be carried off the premises and properly disposed of. All domestic animals must have a current rabies vaccine for the safety of all other people and animals visiting the Cow Pasture.

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Barre City Police Department
15 Fourth St,
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-6613



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