Freeport Conservation Commission

Minutes for December 12, 2023

6:30pm – Freeport Community Center

Members in Attendance: Ben Shepard, Ryan Burke, Matt McLaughlin, Danica Rosenthal, Jamie Arrison, Mike Pistrang

Other in Attendance: Carrie Kinne (Freeport Conservation Trust (FCT)), Chalmers Martinsburg (Freeport Insider)

Members not in Attendance: Margaret Gerber

1. Approve minutes from November meeting
   1. Matt McLaughlin put forward a motion to approve
   2. Ben Shepard seconded the motion
   3. Motion approved unanimously
2. Commission member update/introduction
   1. Danica Rosenthal
   2. Jay Arrison
   3. Mike Pistrang
3. Budget update
   1. None at this time, no expenses incurred yet for 2023-2024 fiscal year
4. Stewards determined for each of the properties
   1. Hidden Pond: Matt McLaughlin
   2. Hedgehog: Mike Pistrang, Margaret Gerber
   3. Florida Lake: Ben Shepard
   4. Soule Park: Ryan Burke
   5. Quarry Woods: Danica Rosenthal, Jamie Arrison
5. Hedgehog focus group update
   1. FCT doing conservation planning for their properties, and looking to tie together conservation properties in town with trails
   2. FCT looking to form focus group for Hedgehog and how Hedgehog ties into adjacent properties and conservation
   3. Carrie Kinne has people in mind from the community to be involved with the focus group
      1. Need a few people from the Conservation Commission to participate
         1. Mike Pistrang, Danica Rosenthal and Margaret Gerber could participate
      2. Carrie Kinne looking to have the FCT lead the focus group
6. Property updates
   1. Hidden Pond
      1. Matt McLaughlin walked the property with the FCT steward
      2. Matt McLaughlin wants to get out with the family who built the original levee at Hidden Pond to get an estimate to rebuild the levee
   2. Hedgehog
      1. Ryan Burke still tracking with high schooler the new sign they’re making to put on Pownal Road
   3. Florida Lake
      1. Flooding
         1. The 12/10/2023 rainstorm flooded many areas of the property
            1. Water slowly receding
         2. Ben Shepard described issues with rain and beavers causing constant flooding at Florida Lake
            1. Ben Shepard described ideas such as brining in fill, building bridges or abandoning vulnerable portions of trails to permanently solve the flooding issues on the north end of the orange trail
            2. Group thought a site visit would help determine next steps
7. Miscellaneous
   1. Maine Conservation Corps onboard for 2024 work
      1. Need to confirm with them in January when exactly they will work in Freeport
   2. Ryan Burke to reach out to new Town Manager about next steps for Soule Park and the idea of replanting the plants that were previously cut down by the French School
8. Adjourn
   1. Matt McLaughlin made motion
   2. Ryan Burke seconded
   3. Approved unanimously

Next meetings:

January 6 at 9:00am, at Florida Lake