Freeport Conservation Commission

Minutes for September 12, 2023

6:30pm – Freeport Community Center

Members in Attendance: Margaret Gerber, Ben Shepard, Ryan Burke, Matt McLaughlin

Other in Attendance: Carrie Kinne (Freeport Conservation Trust (FCT)), Michael Pistrang

Members not in Attendance: John Stroud, Catherine Carroll, Anna Cudmore

1. Approve minutes from August meeting
   1. Ben Shepard put forward a motion to approve
   2. Margaret Gerber seconded the motion
   3. Motion approved unanimously
2. Budget Update
   1. Budget for 2023-2024
      1. $8,170 open line item allocated to the Conservation Commission
      2. In addition, $18,000 of America Rescue Plan money from the federal government secured for Maine Conservation Corps labor in 2024
         1. Labor should be provided before the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2024
            1. This is a tight timeframe as the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) works from June to August
         2. Ben Shepard has filled out a Project Proposal Form for the following proposed projects for the MCC to work on:
            1. Construct approximately 15 spans of 8’ long timber “Ladder Bridge” and complete a new single track hiking trail at the Hidden Pond property on Grant Road.
            2. Install wood chips along trails at the Quarry Woods property near the Mast Landing School to cover up roots on the trails.
            3. Install two 25’ long timber bridges at the Hedgehog Mountain over a stream.
         3. Ryan Burke made motion for Ben Shepard submit the form to the MCC
            1. Matt McLaughlin made a second
            2. Motion approved unanimously
         4. Ben Shepard to submit the Form to the MCC this week
3. Hedgehog Workday
   1. Hedgehog workday to occur in September
      1. September the 16th
         1. Hurricane Lee will probably be rolling through at this time
         2. Work day will be rescheduled and be the next Conservation Commission meeting on October 4 from 4pm to 6pm
            1. Tasks to be done

Install gravel

Trim back vegetation on the summit

Stage lumber for bridges

* + - * 1. Freeport Conservation Trust (FCC) could help advertise for volunteers to help

1. Property updates
   1. No Soule Park updates
   2. Hedgehog
      1. A user (Will Holland) reported to Ryan Burke that at a stream crossing, they had to cross it waist high in water
      2. This can be investigated by Margaret Gerber
      3. Ryan Burke following up on the new Hedgehog Mountain sign to be installed at the end of the Transfer Station Road
         1. The sign is being made
   3. Hidden Pond
      1. Public Works dumped about 6 yards of wood chips at the Grant Road parking lot
      2. Do a work session on September 27 at 4pm
   4. Florida Lake
      1. Beaver issues
         1. Ben Shepard reinforced a beaver deceiver and this has helped stabilize the flooding situation at Florida Lake
         2. Ben Shepard also stuck a special culvert into another beaver dam which also helped
            1. The beavers have plugged this up
            2. This can be addressed by extending the culvert to be longer
      2. Orange trail upgrades along Baker Road
         1. Ben Shepard opened up two portions of re-routed orange trial to get out of muddy areas
            1. One more portion needs to be opened, but it needs six (6) new bridges
      3. Ben Shepard and Earl Gibson have been in contact about re-grading the access past the chain into Florida Lake on the Route 125 entrance
         1. $4,000 allocated in 2023-2024 budget for this
      4. Motion made for $500 of material that includes
         1. Extended culvert at the beaver dam
            1. With cinder blocks to sink the culvert
            2. $100 of gravel for Hedgehog Mountain
         2. Ben Shepard made motion for purchase
         3. Margaret Gerber made a second
         4. Motion passed unanimously
      5. Dogs
         1. Dog walker is back at Florida Lake that had to be warned about a year ago to stop walking about a dozen dogs at a time off leash and not under voice control
         2. If encountered again, Ben Shepard will call the police
2. New members
   1. Danica Rosenthal to start in October
   2. Officers to be elected in October
3. Miscellaneous
   1. The Town wants to discuss another mountain bike proposal at Hedgehog Mountain
      1. Councilor Jake Danielle and Planning Board Chair Sam Kapala approached Ryan Burke about this
         1. Pump track at the Transfer Station or Hunter Road fields, with connections via trails to Hedgehog Mountain away from the summit
         2. Ryan Burke wants to engage Carrie Kinne and the FCT about mountain bike trail connection to the other parts of Town from Hedgehog Mountain
      2. Jake Danielle and Sam Kapala will present a new mountain bike plan to the Freeport Conservation Commission in the near future
   2. Carrie Kinne described current FCT priorities
      1. Accessibility on properties
      2. Tracking hemlock and ash trees
         1. Emerald ash borers
      3. Managing invasive species
4. Adjourn
   1. Matt McLaughlin made motion
   2. Margaret Gerber seconded
   3. Approved unanimously

Next meetings:

September 27 at 4pm at Hidden Pond

October 4 at 4pm at Hedgehog Mountain