**\*\* Meeting Minutes \*\***

**January 17, 2023**

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| **Attendees: (**Present = X) | **Visitors:** |
| Chair | Paul Funch | X | Corey Magliozzi |
| Vice Chair | Wanfang Murray | X | Kiirja Paananen |
| Clerk | Heidi Charlebois | X | Brittain McKinley |
| Members | Sheila Devereaux |  |  |
|  | Adam Burnett |  |  |
|  | Darlene Deschambeault |  |  |
|  | vacant |  |  |
|  | Harris McWade | X |  |
|  | Stephen Legge | X |  |
|  | Richard Lynch | X |  |
|  | Jim Peregoy | X |  |

**CALL TO ORDER -** Funch called the meeting to order at 7:11

**DISCUSSION**

Applicants for open seat on Committee

* Corey Magliozzi – Co-owner at Roots & Rocks Landscape Artisans. He loves hiking and biking, and has years of experience in masonry, drainage, and erosion.
* Kiirja Paananen – A former GTC member in 2018. She would love to rejoin the committee, continue leading hikes, and contribute to social media work.
* Brittain McKinley – A former scout leader and has helped on trail projects. He is well-connected with troops in the Town and very experienced with bridges (bog/horse).
* James Long – He was absent from the meeting.

**VOTE:** Paul moved to recommend Magliozzi for appointment to the Trails Committee by the Town Manager. He felt all candidates were excellent but Magliozzi was the first to apply for the vacant position. Lynch seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

* Committee asked that all applicants stay in touch, help as they can, and come back when future vacancies arise.

**MINUTES**

* Minutes from December 2022. A request was made to increase line spacing in the minutes going forward.

**VOTE:** Motion to approve the December minutes from Funch, seconded by Murray, approved by unanimous vote.

**REPORTS**

**Website and Interactive Map**

* Peregoy's Groton Trails Interactive Map session at Prescott went well. Nineteen registered participants and 14 attendees. Participants requested another session in spring or every quarter.
* Peregoy added a large 'Open Interactive Map' button on the website's front page on mobile phones to support direct access to the map.

**Trail Projects**

* There are a lot of chainsawing requests for the Town Forest due to recent storms.
* Nashua Riverwalk MassTrails grant – The Dept of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is still holding up our Notice of Intent (NOI), waiting for the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) to decide whether DCR needs to submit an Environmental Notification Form (ENF). Funch is pushing to get NOI approved by DCR so he can submit it to the ConComm for approval and then send out a request for bids/quotes to build the trail. Also, our Freedom’s Way grant requires a letter of support from DCR and that is being held up as well.
* Request for letter of support received from Squannacook River Rail Trail (Squannacook Greenways) for their MassTrails Grant application.

**VOTE:** Funch moved to write a letter of support for Phase 4, the final phase of Squannacook River Rail Trail that is due February 1. Peregoy seconded, approved by unanimous vote.

* Gamlin Eagle Scout Project - Murray and Lynch will meet with Chris Pincott to walk through the proposed bog bridge locations at 8:30 on Saturday, January 21.
* Arthur Johnson would like to perform his Eagle Scout project with guidance from GTC. Keyes Woods is a good potential project. The work in Keyes Woods (4 bog bridges and a dump clean-up) is likely big enough to satisfy both Johnson’s and Matthew Valenta’s (who was not able to attend this meeting) projects.

**Subcommittee Reports**

* Groton Conservation Forum - February 16, starting with social time at 6:30. Keynote speaker is Dr. Scott Jackson, who will present “Protecting Forests and Other Ecosystems in the Context of Climate Change” starting at 7:15.
* Help is needed with:
	+ Set-up at 6:00
	+ Clean-up at 9:00
	+ Food/Drink – Veggies, Dip, Cheese & Crackers, Beverages, etc.
	+ Beer and Wine – We need a license from the Town ($50) and liability insurance ($100) via Groton Conservation Trust. Funch requested voluntary donations from committee members to cover the liability insurance cost.
	+ It will be BYOB for committee members, who may share with other attendees.

**DISCUSSION**

**Stewardship Committee Request**

* They asked us to comment on adding QR codes to trailhead posts that link to the rules and regulations for the Town’s conservation parcels. Consensus of the committee was to recommend the following:
1. The QR codes signs should be 4” square to match the Trails Committee’s QR code sign size.
2. As our sign has just one line to describe the link (“GROTON TRAILS NETWORK), it was felt that consistency in the QR markers would look better. This would mean leaving off the graphics they proposed and having just text such as “CONSERVATION COMMISSION LAND USE REGULATIONS”

**Town Policies on Chainsaw Use and Attendance**

* The Town has adopted a new policy regarding chainsaw use on town properties. Any person who has taken a chainsaw safety course and is a member of any town committee may use a chainsaw for clearing of trees as approved by the Town or Trails Committee.
* The Town’s existing policy on committee meeting attendance was distributed to all Trails Committee members. Funch requested the commitment of all committee members to complying with the policy, which is to not miss more than three meetings in a 12-month period.

**VOTE:** At 9:07, Peregoy moved to adjourn, Murray seconded, and approved by unanimous vote.