

Via Zoom

In attendance: Peder Pedersen, Jim Wilkinson, Jeff Keay, Chuck Plaisted, Geoff Caldwell, Rob Protano, Deidre Shapiro (Recreation Liaison)

Meeting called to order: 7:30pm.

1. P. Pedersen moved to accept the agenda for May 20, 2020. Motion 2nd and carried unanimously.
2. Note taker: J. Keay volunteered.
3. R. Protano moved to accept the minutes of the February 18, 2020 meeting as written. Motion 2nd and carried unanimously.
4. Review OSIC Budget/Expenditures for FY2020 – J. Wilkinson
Reports that there is \$91.95 remaining in the 2020 budget.
Budget expenditures included two brush hooks, a new kiosk, booth at Sterling Fair, trail brochures and trail blazes.
Noted that funds for the proposed picnic tables for Sholan park will not be available until June 30, the beginning of the 2021 fiscal year.
5. OSRP Update Progress
P. Pedersen will check with M. Larson.
6. Limited hiking in groups
Guided hiking with OSIC has been informal, taken place on weekdays, and been limited to no more than 5 participants.
7. Use of OSIC hiking trails.
C. Plaisted noted that use of our trails has lately been unprecedented. The town of Sterling has promoted use of the trails, feeling it's a safe way for people to get out of their homes. The town has posted signs at our trailheads encouraging use of the trails while following Covid-19 mitigation guidelines.
8. Trail Blazing Progress
Blazing has been completed on the Lynde Basin, Allenwood, and Heywood Reservoir trails. Next trail to be blazed is the Wauschacum Meadows Trail.
Received a complaint of an unrestrained dog causing an accident on the Allenwood Trail.
C. Plaisted proposed posting signs for dog owners to keep their dogs on a leash, or otherwise under control, and be respectful of land owners and other hikers. G. Caldwell will provide an example of a brochure used by the North Quabbin Trail Association that defines proper use of their trails including dog owner responsibilities.

9. Trail Maintenance

C. Plaisted and P. Pedersen reported that trail maintenance has been done on the Allenwood, Lynde Basin, Heywood Reservoir, and Pine Hill Esker Trails. Noted that there is one major deadfall on the Stillwater Basin Trail, but putting off trail work until the lumbering operation is completed: concerns about the slash that is being left behind,

Discussed need for a bridge over the stream below the dam on the Heywood Reservoir Trail.

C. Plaisted noted that Kathryn Parent of the DCR is interested in resuming joint hikes with us in the future, when it is safe to do so.

10. Development of New Trails

Wauschacum Overlook/Wauschacum Meadows Trail

- P. Pedersen reported the section through Mudgett Orchard needs to be mowed, and should be mowed on a regular basis. He will check with the Conservation Commission as to how this can be done. Noted that in the past the DPW has mowed a path around the orchard.

Peg's Pond Trail

J. Keay noted that the trail will be an ADA compliant trail that connects the Sterling Senior Center to Sterling Greenery Community Park. Reported that two grant proposals asking for funds to construct the trail have been written up and are being considered.

C. Plaisted reported that the initial work on the trail will be provided as an "in kind" donation by the Sterling DPW.

11. Progress Report – Open Space and Recreation topic of the Master Plan – C. Plaisted

Montachusett Regional Planning Council will be using information from our Open Space and Recreation Plan as a way of gathering information they need.

The proposed extension of the Mass Central Rail Trail into Clinton is getting ready for public comment.

12. New Business

R. Protano expressed concerns about the scheduled logging at the Butterick parcel. C. Plaisted and P. Pedersen brought up the logging plans that were sent from Matt Marro that indicated a significant level of care, especially with respect to the location of skid paths.

P. Pedersen mentioned that he has also requested detailed logging plans for the Hall Avenue parcel from M. Marro.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jeff Keay