

Bow Open Spaces, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2015

Board Attendees: Hilary Warner, Ken Demain, Bob Lux, Bob Dawkins, Harry Hadaway, Martin Murray, Eric Thum, Mike Morris
Absent: Frank Boucher

Members: Beth Lux, Jeff Warner, Mike Lax

Guests: Denise and Tom O'Donovan

Secretary's Report: Mike Morris distributed the November 3 minutes. After discussion and review the minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report: Frank was unable to attend the meeting. In Frank's absence, Bob Dawkins reported making a deposit of \$1,170 from paid membership dues into the BOS bank account, bringing the total to about \$26,270.

Membership Report: Bob Dawkins reported receiving 35 membership renewals so far. Reminders will go out to members that have not renewed yet. At Bob's request, Mike Lax and Martin volunteered to work on a membership drive.

Stewardship Report: Ken updated the board on the fall stewardship easement walks.

Saturday October 17th Boucher Forest - Hilary, Harry and Ken completed

Saturday October 24th Trail Work Day – Great Success!

Saturday October 31 Hammond Nature Preserve – Ken and Mike Lax completed

Friday November 6th Stone Sled - Ken, Harry and 5 Stone Sled residents completed

Saturday November 7th Walker Town Forest – Mark Furland and Ken completed

Saturday November 14TH Nottingcook Forest & Guimond Lot - Joan & Mike Lax and Ken completed

Saturday November 21st Old Jonson Road Forest West Boundary– Ken and Bob Lux completed

Saturday November 14th Knox Road Forest - Eric and Ken completed

These events were advertised on the BOS Facebook page and in the October BOS Newsletter.

Regarding the stewardship walks, Ken stated BOS tags were installed along the Burnam property lines in NCF as well as the Guimond lot which abuts NCF. Old Johnson Road needs the corners set by a surveyor. Also, aging blazes on conservation property lines need to be repainted. The BCC maintains these blazes so Ken will contact Nancy Rheinhardt, chair of the BCC. BOS will offer our help and the Town Forester can also be engaged to assist. Bob Dawkins reminded the group that this applies to town owned land. Blazes on conserved private property are the property owners' responsibility. BOS can provide information to these owners to help them comply.

Public Relations: Martin reported that Matt Chagnon, a co-worker, offered his assistance to convert the existing BOS web presence to a full web site which will enable the improvement of the Paypal membership feature. Matt will be compensated for his work. Hillary and Martin worked on the Trail Agreement for Hampshire Hills.

It was noted that BOS is available for high school students who might be looking for a mutually useful project.

Trail Report: Hilary continued working with the residents of Hampshire Hills to get their consent to construct a spur trail at the edge of one resident's property. Volunteer attorney John Laboe reviewed a draft agreement used by Hopkinton and Concord that could be used when we need to have a trail go on private property. Hilary will ask the Town Manager if he would review and approve the agreement which would be between the landowner and the town.

Hilary continued her efforts to reach an understanding with Andy Richardson about best practices of trail development and obtaining permission to construct new trails on conservation lands. A meeting was held with Andy on Sunday November 8th. Hilary submitted the minutes which are included here:

Date: 11/8/2015

Subject: Planning and Coordination of Trail Building Activities in Walker Forest- Boy Scouts and Bow Open Spaces

Attending: Andy Richardson, Martin Murray, Sarah Dolcino, Hilary Warner, Jeff Warner, Ken Demain

We met to talk about coordinating trail building activities.

Bow Open Spaces is grateful for the interest of the Scouts.

Scout trail update: The Scouts worked with the Bow Pioneers to clear the Eagle Trail (from Hammond property through Walker Forest to Branch Londonderry TP) and construct 3 bridges. Another Eagle Scout project involved putting up signs along the Eagle and Webelos Trails. The Webelos Trail has signs at both ends but the trail itself has not been cleared. Bow Open Spaces asked Andy to have the Scouts close up the entrance to the Webelos Trail from the Eagle Trail- it is very wide and inviting to snowmobiles there. From looking at a GPS track of the Eagle Trail laid on a town tax map, it appears that the Eagle Trail/ snowmobile trail leaves the Walker and Hammond Forests and goes for a short distance onto lot 117 (Chadwick). A third Eagle Scout project, a kiosk, is under construction at the new parking lot at the northern end of Branch Londonderry Turnpike- the Selectmen provided approval for this project. The Scouts have plans to make some loop trails off of the Eagle Trail to some "points of interest" such as a cellar hole and waterfalls.

Andy hopes to eventually see a trail that goes from Branch Londonderry Turnpike up to Page Road. The trail would leave from Branch Londonderry Turnpike roughly opposite the Eastman Trail (which comes down from Van Ger Drive), travel along the northwest edge of lot 86-F (Patrick Richardson) and come out on Page Road (across from the Page Road lot).

Bow Open Spaces trail update: A trail going along the southwest boundary of the Walker Forest has been scouted and flagged. BOS is also trying to figure out the best route for a spur trail into the Walker Forest from Hampshire Hills Drive between lots 96-O1 and 96-R1.

All trail projects on land for which BOS holds a conservation easement must be approved by Bow Open Spaces. Scouts interested in doing Eagle Scout projects in town forests should plan ahead to allow for adequate time to present their projects to Bow Open Spaces and to follow best practices. Bow Open Spaces meets on the first Tuesday of the month (except July and August).

Bow Open Spaces offered to provide education opportunities for Scouts on best practices for trail building.

New business:

The Baker Free Library is now our primary meeting place. Reservations for monthly meetings for the first Tuesday of each month November through June are in place.

Bob Dawkins expressed his thanks to Mike Lax and Bob Lux for leaf blowing all the trails in NCF recently.

Mike Lax distributed photos of unauthorized painted markers and ribbon markers on the trails in NCF. Mike removed some of the painted markers using a drill with a wire wheel attachment. Mike suggested creating a poster to discourage this and place the poster in the kiosk. Bob Dawkins reported NCF trail post vandalism. Someone pulled the trail post out of the ground.

Mike Lax would like to see the map for NCF improved with color code trails. Discussion led to a forming a subcommittee with Mike Lax and the O'Donovans as members to address this. If needed the CRNHPC loans a GPS to create tracks that can be overlaid on a map.

Harry received a request from Matt Taylor, Town Planner, looking for a BOS volunteer to serve on a subcommittee to update the town's master plan. Eric Thum volunteered.

Harry received an email from Mr. Chadwick regarding creating a conservation easement on his ~30 acres. Bob Dawkins volunteered to respond to Mr. Chadwick's questions by 12/04. The email is included here for reference:

6 Nov 2015

This discussion concerns a block of property in Bow, NH, identified as Tax Map 29, Block 3, Lot 53 (84-88 Branch Londonderry Turnpike East). Land is owned by Robert and Patricia Chadwick, and is part of a Revocable Trust created in 2007.

The land is presently recorded as "Current Use" per State of NH statutes. It is our intention that this land be held undeveloped. Over 75% of this block is wetland or completely landlocked. Only a few acres adjacent to Branch Londonderry Turnpike (a woods road) is a candidate for a house lot. If it were possible, we would like to make part of it available to any blood descendants of Robert D. and Mary Lyford Chadwick should they wish to settle back in NH. However, it appears

that this is unlikely; they all are scattered across the world and show no interest in returning. Also, discussion with Town of Bow's Property office seems to indicate that, without improved road access to the land, development cost would be excessive.

It is our intention to keep title to the land as long as I am alive. We plan to appoint our son, David John Chadwick, as administrator for this property. Upon my passing, he and Patricia will decide what to do with the title to the land. As stated earlier, the intention is that it NOT BE DEVELOPED. We are investigating alternatives to insure that this land be recorded and kept as forest reserve, wildlife area, or park land. Several organizations seem to have resources to accomplish this goal.

A recent discussion with Mr. Westover at the Town Property Office made me aware of the Bow Open Spaces, Inc., which is a local organization that seems to do what we are looking for. A discussion with Ken Demain provided some insight, but I as I was due to fly back to Florida soon, there were many questions that I couldn't even articulate. The intention of this letter is to raise those questions and hopefully, elicit answers.

1. The Conservation Lands Map shows about 16% of land as "conservation easement". Ken indicated that this is private land; it seems that our land would fall into this category. Please provide some detail of what a conservation easement is, where is it legally defined, what are the rules applying to this, and who enforces it?
2. Ken mentioned that the conservation easement is "in perpetuity". This implies a couple of things. First, "in perpetuity" is a long time. Is there an end date? Second, what happens if, down the line, someone wants to change or cancel the conservation easement?
3. We presently pay property tax to the Town at "current use" valuation. Does this continue?
4. In the future event that title to the land must pass, who gets to be the new owner? I am anticipating that eventually David or Pat will decide it's too much trouble to keep the land and we'd like to know what the alternatives are. Again, whoever we pass it to, I wish that it remain undeveloped.
5. The map shows about 68% of land as "town owned conservation land". Given that this is owned by the town, what prevents the town from deciding to use it for some purpose other than conservation? For example, the manner in which they co-opted conservation land for the high school? This is particularly an interest to us, as we have seen many examples of local (Florida) politicians pushing rezoning of City land that had been zoned for parks/community use and suddenly we find a strip mall or charter school where once was pine trees and birds singing. I do not want to some day look down from my easy chair in Heaven and find that the Town of Bow has paved over my 30 acres.
6. I may be getting ahead of myself here, but there are a couple users of our land that I'd like to keep around. The Snowmobile club has done a fine job with their trail maintenance, and my neighbor Mike Smith hunts on the land. Anyone else (dirt bikes, ATV's, picnickers with trash) I am not so enthused about. Can we keep these folks in the loop?

Next BOS meeting: The next meeting is January 5 at 7pm in the Baker Free Library located at 509 South Street Bow NH. The board voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.