

## BOW OPEN SPACES

Final minutes, Baker Public Library

Date: November 7, 2023

OFFICERS and BOARD ATTENDEES: Harry Hadaway, Tom O'Donovan, Bob Lux, Frank Boucher. Board: Bob Hawkins, Martin Murray, Eric Thum, Marc Ferland. Absent: Ken Demain. Members: Sandy Crystall, Brian Harjula, Meme Exum, Beth Lux

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The report was approved and accepted with minor changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The report was approved and accepted with additional motions to put \$40-50k in 2 CDs at Merrimack CSB and to include the BOS Annual Report (financial form NHCT-12) filed with the state in the meeting minutes.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: not covered at this meeting

LAND CONSERVATION: The Westover/Coastal mitigation is currently hung up with DES and Coastal negotiations. NHF&G has concerns about the hog-nosed snake and habitat equivalent to what is being destroyed in the flood plain. Tom noted 'we raise our issues and wait for the outcome of the bigger, complicated issues in hopefully moving forward.'

The Houghton lot went for a Source Water Protection (SWP) grant making it to the subcommittee phase. BOS was awarded a grant for \$44,350 (30k for stewardship, namely for a legal defense fund with abutters). It goes to the full commission on 20 November, then to Governor and Council, hopefully by next spring.

On parcel 27-3-30-1, a 25 acre lot on S. Bow Road, there is a proposal to construct a 1200' driveway within a few feet of the property line. A wetland impact already exists there. This may require both planning board and ZBA approval for a conditional use permit. Tom says this is in a conservation focus area - it has Blanding's turtles and is a keystone parcel for lot connectivity. Tom notes that these long driveways are essentially town roads with similar impact. It may eventually be 'another long driveway' for a single house.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: From **current members** - we have \$3300 in dues and additional \$125 in charitable contributions; last year at this time, we had \$1655 in dues, so \$1645 more, from 18 paid members so far and 22 at this time last year.

At this time, for **active members** - (Nov 1, '22 to Oct. 31st) we received \$5725 in dues (from 83 members ) versus \$5815 last year (from 82 members), thus down \$90 but up one member.

STEWARDSHIP: Eric & Bob walked the Patrick Richardson easement boundary finding/confirming the twelve surveyed points. BOS finally received the survey map from Fieldstone. Blazing is absent. Eric will contact Ron Klemarczyk for a quote on that. He notes a treehouse on the line and will speak with the landowner. There are four lots of Page Road houses whose property seems to cross over the easement boundary as determined by the surveyors and by line of sight, lacking blazes. This likely doesn't violate the easement yet the boundary still needs to be distinct. The line between rough and fine backyard mowing may not be the line between the houses and the easement.

Eric met with Ryan Kiley living at 5 Arnold Dr. (thru Bob Chadwick) regarding trees on or close to the Chadwick easement line and close to Ryan's house. Eric said there's no problem cutting them as long as the cut brush is not put on easement property.

The Pushee-Chadwick easement, located behind Sundance Lane (25ac, lot #13-4-117) has been donated to the town. Sandy is drafting a conservation easement for it. Additionally, Bob notes we never finalized/secured the stewardship donation for the Crescent easement.

Carol Niegisch has adopted Knox Forest monitoring. Bob Lux is in charge of Hammond NP. The Hammond easement was drafted by Harry Judd in ? year. BOS offered its stewardship service at that time to the town. Bob feels it is time for a proper conservation easement at Hammond. A deed restriction may complicate such a transaction. Bob says this would have to go to town meeting as a warrant article in 2025.

Eric says he'll get the files into the Heritage Commission in space the library. Bob has a lot of old BOS paper files /maps for this storage, too. These don't need scanning. Brian says he can scan documents up to three feet if needed.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT:** Martin says our web site (Word Press) went down for 24 hours in early October. Our current web administrator wants to retire and asks that Martin not update the site. Getting the new web site under a different platform is imperative. Currently, we have a site map of the new web site and the main pages are drafted. We need good, interesting content for these pages - eg., the history of Nottingcook, the making of its easement etc. The newsletter was sent out by Martin just before this meeting. He sent 229 copies to email addresses with 136 opened. Seven linked to the trail maps in Nottingcook. 450 saw the newsletter on Facebook, clicked on by 86 viewers with two (positive) comments. Martin utilized an image from AI of two hikers in the woods in hunting orange. He is always looking for content for the next. Bob notes Eric finished his NH 4000 footers as a possibility. He wants pictures of board members for the new website and asks they be sent to him with an accompanying short biography.

Crown trophies will provide a new sign at the Great Hill summit when provided with a new horizon peak/hill locator picture.

**TRAILS REPORT:** Mark says he doesn't have much to say regarding trails today. Tom says he found two individuals building a new trail near Nancy's Trail in Nottingcook. He spoke with them - two adult mountain bikers in need of education re unauthorized trail making. They'd flagged/made almost a mile of trail, with some tree and rock removal. Nottingcook does not need new trails. 'Chagrined, caught red-handed' Tom says. He suggest they be part of the solution, not the problem and is meeting with them next week. This could be construed as a defacing public property issue. In a worst case scenario, Tom questions if it would go the the conservation committee. Harry reports the School Forest loop was leaf-blown, saplings clipped and various trails cleaned. Marc says the work was done by Jim Whalen on the trails committee. Marc and Rick Silverberg also replaced a bridge on Boundary Trail.

**WRAP UP:** Tom brings up the the idea of a focus talk on one topic at each monthly BOS meeting. His proposals: in December, a chat on community development with Karri Makinen - how BOS and community development can work together; in January, Meme will show a prototype for the BOS website; in February, finalize the budget; in March, review land conservation criteria; in April, trails committee and ConCom work; in May, BOS by-laws; in June, the members' picnic; in September, board elections; in October, the fiscal year close out. Bob pointed put that our by-laws state board elections are in June, needing resolution.

Sandy spoke on the need to formalize an approach for BOS trail work from various parties in town. Currently maintenance activity is open-ended and unscheduled on town lands. We need a formalized plan for designating who does what on forest trail work etc. Mark says Facebook currently is the main method for dissemination of town information. Sandy brings up a list-serv

approach with the same info in the same order for all readers. A process for designating who does what in the way of forest maintenance is essential, eg, the Robertson snow mobile trail... different interests, different approaches. Bob mentions lawsuits that might evolve from unauthorized trail maintenance injuries. We can't just have random individuals on BOS trails with dangerous tools, namely chainsaws.

Finally, Brian brings up a volunteer project of building a bridge in Hopkinton-Everett reservoir (Clough SP) and the work necessary to complete it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Lux  
Secretary  
Bow Open Spaces