

DRAFT

THE RANDOLPH FOREST COMMISSION NOVEMBER 6, 2019

Members Present: John Scarinza, Walter Graff and Laura Brockett

Alternates Present: David Willcox

Others Present: Michele Cormier, David DeGruttola (LandVest) and David Falkenham (LandVest)

The chairman opened the meeting at 7: 00. He asked David Willcox to sit for Mark Kelley. The minutes of the October meeting were unanimously approved.

David Degruttola then presented the draft of an amendment to the stewardship plan which would be needed to authorize a winter timber harvest of trees damaged by a combination of careless timbering practices in the past and the recent infestation of caterpillars. The proposed amendment would add a 284-acre salvage cut (referred to as the “Randolph Salvage Cut”) to the 800 acres already scheduled for treatment this winter. Two different contractors have been lined up to work on the two projects. Also, Brendan Prusik (County Forester) is being consulted with regard to the Dirt-to-Trees-to-Wildlife opportunities opened up by the salvage cut. The possibility of doing an experimental seeding of softwoods is being considered. The soils in the area are good for softwoods but the past commercial owners of the land encouraged the spread of hardwoods. Now, it is difficult to get softwoods to grow back to the original locations. But if seeds can be blown onto snow-covered ground before being covered by new snow, they should be able to germinate while being protected from birds.

The amendment was approved by the Commission. It will now be placed before the Planning Board for its consideration. The two LandVest representatives agreed to come to the Planning Board meeting to answer any questions which might be asked by members of that Board. If approved again, it will need to be sent to DRED for its approval. This should not take long since DRED’s local forester, Maggie Machinist, has already been notified informally that the proposal is coming.

David Degruttola also reported that the work on the road was now complete; the culverts being paid for by the US Forest Service had been installed. The USFS had been informed that the work was done, and the Town should now be able to send it the invoice for the work done.

John reported that more work needed to be done on the Pond of Safety Road; specifically, five bridges or bottomless culverts were needed to facilitate the movement of fish and other aquatic creatures. We will seek a grant from NRCS to cover most of the costs. Kelly Eggleston, who works for NRCS, has come up with a simple one-page work sheet which makes it possible for the Town to apply for grants even though NRCS rules prohibit its funds from being used by public

institutions. The answer is a pass-through. In our case, the Randolph Foundation has agreed to play this role. The project is likely to cost around \$100 to 150,000.

John also noted that we have been asked to allow a dogsled race on the Forest this winter. The race would be held on the snowmobile trail along, or parallel to, the Pond of Safety Road. Race organizers have been advised that they need to coordinate with the Waumbek-Methna snowmobile club.

David Willcox presented a draft of an amendment to the Town Forest Ordinance which would allow the Planning Board to designate “special use areas” on the Forest. In areas so designated the Forest Commission would be authorized to establish rules governing the use of the land by the public. When land within the Forest is set aside for a particular purpose, there may be a need to adopt rules specifically tailored to promote and protect that purpose. The Commission approved the draft amendment. It is referred to the Planning Board which will hold a public hearing and, if approved by the Board, it will be placed on a ballot to be voted on at Town Meeting.

The Commission considered and approved five invoices:

Two from Brian Lamarre

For mowing the Farrar Farm	\$600
For mowing the Randolph Hill Parking Lot area	\$480

One from LandVest dated 9/30/2019	\$788.66
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One from Chuck Jellison for mowing wildlife openings on Pond of Safety Road	\$2240
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One from John Scarinza (reimbursement for payment to Jeff Wilson for scraping and painting Farrar Farm Garage building, including materials and labor)	\$5037.38
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It was agreed that David Forsyth’s article in the Mountain View about the ornithological “hot spot” on the Farrar Farm section of the RCF should be posted on our website. Laura Brockett agreed to see that that was done.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed by general consent at 8:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted

David L. Willcox
Acting Secretary

Posted at Town Hall on November 7, 2019