

Town of Randolph

Planning Board Minutes

February 6, 2020

Members Present: Robert Ross, John Scarinza, Tim Mather

Members Excused: Roberta Arbree and John Turner

Public Present: Bill Arnold

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by John Scarinza.

Minutes of January 2, 2020 – On a motion from Robert Ross, with a second from Tim Mather, the Board voted to accept the January 2, 2020 minutes as presented.

New Business

Community Forest Budget

John Scarinza reviewed the budget for the Community Forest with the Board. Scarinza explained that there are several placeholder items in the budget if they are needed, but they are not always used. The 2019 expense budget was \$122,700, and the actual expenses were \$58,463. Under income, \$75,000 is budgeted for timber sales, and they are currently harvesting 500-700 acres, of which some is salvage from the forest tent caterpillars. Robert Ross asked if this has affected the maple taps, and Scarinza advised that Fuller has pulled out of this area. The vast majority of the yield will be sugar maple, but they are also taking any ash due to the ash borer. There will be a clear cut of about 40 acres in a high mortality zone. Many of the logs will be able to be used as saw logs, and some will be used as railroad ties. The budget also includes \$20,000 in revenue from maple taps, for a total of \$95,000.

In reviewing the expense budget, timber sale expenses is budgeted at \$31,500, and includes the administration, layout, road maintenance, and maple lease administration. The budget last year was \$27,500, and the actual spent was \$24,691. The increase this year is \$4,000 in Timber Sale Layout. Under General Maintenance, the Boundary Line budget was increased \$2,000, as they did not do this last year due to the crew not being available. Gates are needed in two places, one by the Farrar farm to stop people from driving into the meadow, and another to replace the rocks on a road into the valley to provide access for mowing or emergency response. Brush cutting is budgeted at \$10,000 and is done on a 3-year rotation. Robert Ross asked if there would be more maintenance needed with the Gorham acquisition, and Scarinza advised there will be some, but not much more. The total General Maintenance line is up \$2,000 for a total of \$28,000. Other items include \$20,000 for the Farrar Farm Site, which was spent on painting last year and will be used to remove the old house this year. Stewardship is used for updates to the stewardship plan, which will need to be done this year since they are adding the 200 acres from Gorham. Money for Education is used for the Forest Tour Day. Website maintenance runs between \$500-\$600 per year. The Small Grants Program has not been taken advantage of, and they may need to publicize

more, including notifying graduate students in the Forestry Program at UNH. Robert Ross suggested that doing a bird survey would be a good idea, as there has been a noticeable decline in birds in the area. The WHIP Grants are for Wildlife Habitat Improvement and are there as a placeholder, but have not been used in 4 or 5 years. This year they are planning to use it along with Federal grant money to replace culverts on the Pond of Safety road to improve stream crossings. The survey and engineering work has been done for this at no cost to the town, and they are waiting on design work to apply for the grant money. Trail construction and maintenance is done on Community Forest trails by the RMC. The Community Forest has a MOU with the RMC, and they are paid for the work. There is a Payment in Lieu of Taxes paid to Jefferson and Randolph, as if the property were in current use. Total expenses for the 2020 budget are \$123,700.

On a motion by Robert Ross, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2020 Community Forest budget as presented.

Special Use Area Amendment

John Scarinza presented a Special Use Area Amendment to the Land Use Ordinances that would allow special uses on the Community Forest. This would be for activities such as gathering at the motorcycle site, dog sled races, orienteering events, and the Randolph Ramble. This will give the Planning Board authority to require things such as insurance, clean-up, or whatever is deemed appropriate for the activity. Bill Arnold noted that there has been a group using the land for avalanche courses. Robert Ross asked if the town is liable if someone were to be injured and Scarinza advised that the town is not liable unless they are charging a fee. This amendment will be a ballot item.

On a motion by Robert Ross, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Special Use Area Amendment for inclusion on the ballot as an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance.

Adjournment: On a motion by Robert Ross, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelli Fortin
February 7, 2020