

# Town of Randolph

## Planning Board Minutes

December 6, 2023

**Members Present:** June Hammond Rowan, Robert Ross, Tim Mather, Kevin Rousseau, John Turner (7:22 pm), and William Demers

**Members Excused:** None

**Public Present:** Mark Kelley, Randolph Forest Commission; Howard Wemyss; and Shelli Fortin, Minutes Taker

1. Call to Order

June Hammond Rowan called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.  
William Demers was the alternate filling in for John Turner until his arrival.

2. Roll Call

3. Review of Minutes

**On a motion by Robert Ross, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the November 2, 2023, meeting as presented.**

4. Communications to the Board

The Board received a petitioned warrant article for an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance to allow freestanding solar arrays. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

5. Report of Officers and Committees

a. Selectboard

There was no report from the Selectboard.

b. Randolph Forest Commission

Tim Mather advised that there was continued discussion about the management of the glades at the Forest Commission meeting. They are currently working on the third stewardship plan.

6. Applications

No new applications were received.

## 7. Unfinished Business

June Hammond Rowan advised that the lot line adjustment between the Browns and the Town of Randolph has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds. The Conservation Commission agreed to accept the land at their last meeting, and the Selectboard has also approved it. This will now go to Town Meeting for the voters to approve turning over the management of the parcel to the Forest Commission. Mark Kelly advised that Thomas McCue will do the legal work. William Demers asked what would happen if the voters did not approve it and was advised the Selectboard would manage it.

## 8. Other Business

### a. Randolph Community Forest Budget

June Hammond Rowan advised that Section 19 of the Land Use Ordinance outlines the administration of the Community Forest, and the role of the Planning Board.

Mark Kelley presented a PowerPoint to the Board on the Randolph Community Forest, noting the members of the Forest Commission, the activity managers, the recent bridge project, income sources of timber harvesting and the maple lease, and reviewed the proposed budget. Smaller upcoming projects include the Water Wheel right-of-way, early successional habitat on the Potter tract, knotweed control, softwood stand improvement, and road maintenance.

June Hammond Rowan asked if Fuller has reached the maximum number of maple taps, and Mark Kelley advised they have not. They could still add more in the area they are in, as well as other parts of the forest. There was a rate increase per tap last year, and they are currently at \$1.23 per tap per the contract. A board member asked if they were paying for the use of the garage on the Farrar property and was advised they are not, however they do pay the electric bill. Fuller needed to place a tank to hold sap in the garage.

Howie Wemyss asked about the inholding of land in the Community Forest and was advised it is private property. Mark Kelley also advised that they own approximately 1300 acres in Jefferson.

June Hammond Rowan asked about the Forest Management Revolving Fund, and requested that this balance be included with the budget for the Public Hearing. Mark Kelley explained that they have a Grants and Gifts account and the Revolving Fund, of which one is a savings account and the other a checking account. Mr. Kelley advised that there is currently approximately \$131,000 in the revolving fund.

The Payment in lieu of Taxes payment was made to the Town of Jefferson for \$1,337. There is also a payment made to the Town of Randolph, as if the land was in current use, so that there is no lost tax revenue for the town on the land in the Community Forest.

Mark Kelley advised he will get the names and addresses of the activity managers to June Hammond Rowan to notify them of the Public Hearing in January.

b. Land Use Ordinance – Petitioned Warrant Article

June Hammond advised that a petitioned warrant article was received, requesting an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance to allow freestanding solar arrays. The Board will need to review this and hold a public hearing.

William Demers noted that whether you are in favor of this or not, he feels bad for some residents who have to look at arrays that are on front lawns. Howard Wemyss stated that someone could build a Quonset hut, which he may not care for, but would not have a say in whether it was built. Mr. Demers agreed, noting that often you do not get a say in what others put on their property.

June Hammond Rowan stated that her only concern is that the warrant article is supposed to be in the same text, and she will contact the town attorney about the format.

John Turner noted that they have already discussed this issue and was advised that the petitioned warrant article would overturn their decision.

A Board member asked Mr. Wemyss about his experience applying for the special exception for his solar array, and Mr. Wemyss advised it was a lot of paperwork, some expense, and felt like an unnecessary barrier. Mr. Wemyss stated that someone could install solar panels on their roof with no special exception required.

June Hammond Rowan also advised that she received an email from Paul Cormier asking for an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance removing kennels as a use by special exception and requiring a variance. The Board of Adjustment recently had an application for a special exception for a kennel, and it is believed that they felt the criteria were hard to deal with. A Board member suggested contacting Tara Bamford to see if other towns require a variance for a kennel. After the discussion, the Board decided to hold a public hearing on this proposed amendment as well.

c. Master Plan

June Hammond Rowan passed out copies of the revised Master Plan. Ms. Hammond Rowan stated that it is not on the website yet.

d. Application Fees

June Hammond Rowan advised that the Selectboard did approve the new fee schedule, charging one application fee, and flat rate of \$12 per notice and \$50 for the ad in the newspaper.

**On a motion by Robert Ross, seconded by Kevin Rousseau, the Board voted unanimously to approve the new fee schedule as presented.**

e. Planning Board Budget

June Hammond Rowan passed out copies of the Planning Board budget. Costs include the minute taker, meetings and training, Tara Bamford, and public hearings which also have a revenue line to offset that item.

f. 2024 Planning Services Agreement

June Hammond Rowan advised that Tara Bamford sent the 2024 agreement for planning services. The cost is \$100 per hour, except for long-standing clients, which is \$60 per hour. Ms. Hammond Rowan advised that the Board could ask for Bamford to review subdivision plans, and this cost would be covered by the applicant.

**On a motion by Kevin Rousseau, seconded by Tim Mather, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Planning Services Agreement with Tara Bamford for 2024.**

g. Town Report

June Hammond Rowan asked if the Board had any ideas for items to include in the Town Report. Ms. Hammond Rowan advised that she would write a draft report.

h. Other

The Board was reminded that the Police Survey Meeting will be held on Monday, December 11. The Board was advised that the proposed wildlife crossing will be discussed at the Selectboard Meeting.

9. Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

11. Adjournment

**On a motion by Tim Mather, seconded by Robert Ross, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Shelli Fortin  
December 8, 2023