



Randolph Community Forest

Sustainable forestry & traditional uses on 10,000 acres in Randolph, NH

Date: November 5, 2025

Location: Randolph Town Hall

Members Present: Mark Kelley, Walter Graff, Laura Brockett, David Willcox, Nate Reid, Tim Mather, Alex Roberts, and Rick Fournier

Guests Present: David DeGruttola from LandVest, Newell White, and Shelli Fortin,
Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 6:27 pm.

I. Review October Minutes

On a motion by Laura Brockett, seconded by Nate Reid, the Commission voted to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2025, meeting as presented.

II. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Three invoices were received. An invoice was received from LandVest for \$1,002.30 for their monthly work. An invoice was received from White Mountain Lumber in the amount of \$590.00. An invoice was received from Elise Lawson, Watershed to Wildlife, for \$750. All invoices were approved for payment and signed.

B. Payments Received

No payments were received this month.

C. Financial Review

Mark Kelley advised the financial report will be reviewed along with the budget later in the meeting.

III. Maple Sugar Lease

Mark Kelley advised that there are still a few questions to answer for the attorney. David Willcox agreed to contact Attorney Tom McCue, Fuller's, and possibly the Planning Board Chair, to finalize this contract matter.

IV. RMC MOU

The Planning Board is currently working on the MOU with the RMC. No update has been received.

V. Current Use and Timber Taxes - Status

Mark Kelley advised that the Town is still waiting for the tax rate to be set by the State. Both the PILT and the timber tax amounts will be approved for payment at the December meeting so that the Town can be paid before the end of the year.

VI. Forester's Report

David DeGruttola advised that the road work on Little Ledges Road to the landing has been completed and the gate has been installed. The gate will remain locked. They have also blocked access with rocks and a berm off of Deerfly Road. The gate was installed on Walker Road, which will be opened in the winter to allow access for the groomer and the snowmobile club during riding season and will be closed when the season is done.

Mr. DeGruttola advised that they he has completed the culvert assessment of Jimtown Road and advised will present this during the budget discussion.

David Willcox asked if Mr. DeGruttola has been able to meet with the USFS, and Mr. DeGruttola stated that he has been unable to meet with them yet but has been in contact. Despite the government shutdown, they have been responding to emails about this and other items.

VII. 2025 Other Projects

A. Wildlife Transect Clearing

Mark Kelley advised that he has not heard back from the Selectboard yet about the possibility of hiring the contractor as a Town employee.

B. Moose Hunt on RCF

Mark Kelley advised that the gentleman who requested to use an ATV to possibly retrieve a moose on Town Forest land had a successful hunt. The moose taken was 809 pounds, 11 points, and a 43" spread. Laura Brockett opened the gate for him to use the ATV to retrieve the moose.

Kelley advised that every gate now has a combination lock, and the combinations will be changed periodically.

C. Map of Mowing

Mark Kelley advised he worked with Elise Lawson on a plan for roadside mowing, along with areas for wildlife openings and early successional habitat. Kelley provided a map of the areas, which include Jimtown Road, Pond of Safety Road area, and the Farrar Tract. A schedule for mowing was also proposed. This will be reviewed by David DeGruttola.

D. Trailhead Parking Area on Randolph Hill Road

Mark Kelly advised that the Town would plow around the area, and they will need to provide plowing for the parking spaces. Kelley will check with Bill Arnold to see if he is interested in doing this, as he has provided this service in the past. Newell White advised that he would be available if Mr. Arnold was not.

Laura Brockett asked if permits would be issued to residents. Kelley advised that there will be two parking areas in the lot that will be for residents only, but permits will not be issued. Tim Mather asked when the signs will be installed, as they had originally planned for November 1. Kelley advised they will be put up soon. Brockett suggested that a notice about the parking area be put in the *Mountain View*, however it was decided since this is a soft opening it would not be advertised.

VIII. 2026 Budget Review

Mark Kelley provided the Board with a draft budget for review.

For income, \$81,000 was received last year, however they are proposing budgeting \$70,000 as there are lower values expected for the timber harvest. David DeGruttola advised he has planned on 2,000 gross cords at \$35 per cord. Walter Graff asked what the forest plan allows for the harvest, and Mr. DeGruttola stated they are allowed 3,600 cords per year; however, the silviculture recommendation is for 2,000 cords for that site. The additional cords can be banked for another year.

The Maple Lease Income will be budgeted at \$33,500 based on 25,000 taps at \$1.34 per tap. Mark Kelley advised that Fuller does have someone interested in purchasing the business and working the taps. It was suggested that Mr. Fuller attend a meeting along with the interested party to introduce them if the sale moves forward.

There is \$4,000 budgeted under NH Fish and Game for a Habitat Grant. David DeGruttola advised that he will check with Jake DeBow to see when they last used one of these grants. The grant can be used for any habitat improvement work and could be used for Bronto work on the Potter tract or permanent wildlife opening work in the Randolph Community Forest. This is not a matching grant.

David DeGruttola had suggested including \$30,000 for in kind work from the US Forest Service, however this will be removed as income as it is not cash received. This project will require oversight by LandVest.

In reviewing expenses, Kelley noted that only \$300 has been expended from the Timber Sale Administration line last year, when \$3,000 was budgeted. It was suggested that some items may have been incorrectly listed in another line. They are proposing to budget \$3,500 in this line for 2026. Timber Sale Marking and Layout was budgeted last year at \$14,000, and \$18,000 was spent. This line will be increased to \$20,000 for 2026.

Mr. DeGruttola advised that \$42,000 has been budgeted for road maintenance for the work on Jimtown Road. Mr. DeGruttola advised that he has walked the full length of the road following the manual for cross drains, and 31 culverts will be needed according to Best Management Practices (BMP) standards. Mr. DeGruttola proposed breaking the project into two years, doing the first mile of the road starting on the Randolph side next year. The bridge project will be separate. David Willcox suggested contacting Clint Savage to see if the Trails Bureau can help, as this road is used as a snowmobile trail. Using gravel on-site was discussed. They are hoping to start the project in late June or early July, depending on the weather. Parking will not be compromised during the project. It was suggested that this be advertised in the *Mountain View* in the spring issue to let residents know what is happening.

Maple Lease Administration is budgeted at \$1,000, as if there is a sale there will be a transition period with oversight needed. Timber Sales Expenses is budgeted at \$3,000 for the timber harvest and meeting with NHFG related to wildlife habitat improvement as needed. Total Timber Sales Expenses is budgeted at \$66,000 and was at \$47,000 last year.

Legal Expenses is budgeted at \$2,000 and \$553 has been spent this year. A little more will be needed for the completion of the Maple Tap Lease.

Coop Road Forest Service is budgeted at \$5,000, but nothing has been used this year. Mr. DeGruttola noted that spot gravel will be needed on the Pond of Safety Road. It was suggested that an additional line item be added for Road Maintenance, as the Jimtown Road project is not related to timber sales but is listed under those expenses. Mark Kelley will speak to Linda about this.

Boundary and Transects Maintenance is at \$4,000 to maintain the wildlife transects. David DeGruttola will contact Steven Roberge from UNH in reference to finding someone to collect data, however the Town Forest may be too far a distance for a UNH wildlife project. They had originally planned to use citizen scientists for this. Another suggestion was to contact Jeff Littleton of Moosewood Ecological.

Nothing is budgeted for Parking Construction or Parking Maintenance. Three gates were done this year, and no more are planned. They had originally budgeted \$12,000 for this, but the price came to \$24,000. It was noted that one gate was added to the original plan.

Brush Cutting had \$3,000 in expenses last year, and is planned to be budgeted at \$5,000 this coming year. Farrar Farm Site will be budgeted for \$5,000 for the Japanese Knotweed application follow up. David DeGruttola advised that Joel White was able to get a good kill with the first application. Stewardship is budgeted at \$7,500 for the third installment of the stewardship plan, which spreads the cost over four years.

Education and Research is budgeted at \$3,000 and will be kept as a placeholder in case it is needed. Website Maintenance is budgeted at \$300. There has been nothing spent in Small Grants; however, it is there to encourage people to come do projects in the Forest.

Habitat Improvement is budgeted at \$35,000 to establish a permanent wildlife opening off of Deerfly Road. The 5-acre site that was discussed will need road work to get to it, however there is another smaller 2-acre area straight up to the last landing for which no road work would be involved. The first area is a nice site with softwood along the edges, but it is expensive. The smaller area could be mowed in the summertime and is drier, and this would reduce the cost.

Mapping is budgeted at \$2,500 for edits and changes needed. Meetings and Consultants is budgeted at \$10,000 for consulting work not associated with timber harvesting. This also includes Forest Day, Tree Farm inspection, road

maintenance supervision, consultation with conservation easement holder as needed and meetings with stakeholders.

Conservation Easement Monitoring is budgeted at \$1,000 for summer and winter monitoring tours. It was suggested that \$2,000 be budgeted for Trail Construction and Maintenance.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes is budgeted at \$10,000. The total expense budget comes to \$146,000. Mark Kelley will create a final draft of the budget for the December Forest Commission meeting, which will be presented to the Planning Board next month for a public hearing in January.

IX. Other Business

Laura Brockett advised that she and Tim Mather attended the Bethel Field Trip, which included a walk around their Forest which is being managed for recreation.

Mark Kelley advised that he was able to take a tour of old growth forest in Franconia Notch. The speaker was someone who also presented in Randolph recently. Kelley suggested that it would be nice for Randolph to enhance it's walkable interpretive trail.

X. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm by general consensus.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 3 , 2025, at 6:30 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelli Fortin