

**Fayston Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**January 24, 2024, 6:21 - 7:30 pm**  
**Meeting Held by Zoom**

Members Present: Andrea Henderson, Amy Dalton, Brian Litmans, Woody Dugan, Corrie Miller, Pete Colgan, Patty Pasley

**Minutes Approved**

1. Andrea moved to approve. Pete seconded. No discussion. All voted in favor.
2. Need to determine protocols related to last minute changes to meetings due to weather, other circumstances, etc. Andrea will contact Patti Lewis for guidelines.

**FCC Administration - Annual Report - Andrea**

1. Collaborative effort is very effective in tackling reports, minutes, etc. Report submitted in keeping with 1/15/24 deadline to Patti Lewis. Patti has made the requested updates to the FCC website, including posting Fayston Knotweed Pilot Project Report.

**Project Updates**

● **MRV Bear Initiative – Amy**

1. Amy is stepping down due to other commitments. Andrea has offered to represent the FCC going forward and joined the Jan 23 BI meeting. Because FCC commits funds to the BI, the suggestion was made to provide feedback to the group, for Amy to make note of her experiences as part of the BI. The FCC believes in the importance of accountability. A recommendation was made to meet with other MRV conservation commissions to identify then articulate the Valley CC's goals to the Bear Initiative. It would be beneficial to include FMR in a conversation among Valley CCs regarding BI goals. The BI will hold a strategic meeting on March 26, 8-10am.

● **Knotweed – Andrea**

1. Lake Champlain Basin Program has approved the Invasive Species Management and Ecosystem Restoration in the Mad River Valley project grant - total grant award over the two years period is \$100k.

Fayston Select Board was notified. Strong collaborative efforts made this possible. Article regarding award published in the Valley Reporter. Warren and Waitsfield CCs met with FMR on Jan 16 re: visioning, coordination, and broadening capacity. On Feb. 19, the three CCs will meet with UVM professors for potential grant project involvement, including a tour of the sites in the Valley where knotweed is currently being managed.

2. The grant's proposal included a non federal match of \$69k from the three towns of funds and volunteer hours. The Fayston Conservation Commission's request to the Town of Fayston for an Invasive Species Reserve Fund of \$5000 was considered in the total estimated non-federal match. Discussion regarding the potential implications if the Selectboard doesn't approve FCC's proposed budget with that line item allocation. No action taken at this time.

- **Boyce Hill – Pete and Woody**

1. Pete and Woody met to discuss future direction. The issue was raised about advancing projects/plans when money isn't available until it's approved at the March town meeting. A pruning workshop is planned for March. Work continues on creating the Boyce Hill Stewardship Committee.

2. There was discussion about signage and Mad River Path funding needed to support this. There is some concern about kiosks being moved and money no longer available. Misha with Mad River Path confirmed that the money is there.

- **Chase Brook - Patty and Amy**

1. Andrea and Patty worked to fix the bridge railing that was damaged due to a fallen limb. Materials cost donated by Andrea and Patty. Questions arose around who was responsible for the repair. Mad River Path organized construction of the bridge and that they, along with the Mad River Riders and Catamount Trail Association are partners in stewarding this town forest. Amy will draft a letter to these stakeholders in order to clarify what entity(ies) bear responsibility for infrastructure within this parcel. This information will be vital to the updates to the Chase Brook

Management plan scheduled for 2024-25.

- **Conservation and Recreation Visioning - Corrie**

1. Mark your calendar: Tues. Feb 6 at 6-8pm at Valley Players: Learning Session with Meredith Naughton, Wildlife Biologist with the Green Mountain-Finger Lakes National Forest. For more information on Naughton's research:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgvcVmswHpQ>

This will inform CRV work moving forward.

2. Next steering committee meeting to be scheduled early-mid Feb. to discuss a work plan document to guide production of deliverables. Plan will be shared at a public forum in April.

- **CRV Representation with Corrie Departure - Corrie**

1. Corrie will be leaving the FCC as well as her position as co-chair of the Ecological Integrity Working Group at the end of Feb. Brian attended the CRV meeting on Jan. 24 and was confirmed as the new FCC representative.

- **FCC Process for Endorsing Grant Applications**

1. Points to consider as we determine process:

- Grants sometimes require matching funds from applicants. Once approved, organization is under contract and responsible for providing matching funds.
- Distinctions in process need to be made for varying levels of grant activity: Co-applicant vs. supporter vs. partner
- Prior to engaging in grant activity, FCC needs to have conversations in order to understand what we're supporting, what the level of commitment is, etc.
- Question remains: gap between the new fiscal cycle and budget approval at the town meeting in March and how to handle expenditures during that time
- Brian will create and share a Google document that will inform a flowchart of questions, re: all potential grant scenarios and process for engaging. The recommendation was made to consult our partners on other Valley CCs re: this topic

- **Other Business**

1. Fayston will hold the upcoming tri-town conservation commission meeting. George at Lareau Farm is willing to host. Target date - early April. Andrea will coordinate timing with Waitsfield and Warren Conservation Commissions, and check availability with George.
2. FCC web page needs to be updated.
3. Amy will locate the Chase Brook Management plan appendices with map - currently not in FCC folder or on website.
4. Green Up Day launched on FPF. First meeting to be held next week.
5. This was Corrie's last FCC meeting, as she needs to miss the February meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 7:30 by Corrie. Woody seconded. All voted in favor.

- Next Meeting: **Feb. 28, 2024 at 5:45pm**