Fayston Conservation Commission Minutes

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025

5:45 - 7:00 pm

Fayston Municipal Office

1. **In Attendance:** Brian Litmans, Andrea Henderson, Pete Colgan, Woody Dugan
2. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:02pm
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Dec. 17, 2024 approved. Motion made by Pete to approve 12/17/24 minutes. Seconded by Andrea. All voted in favor and the minutes passed.
4. **FCC Administration**
    a. **Outgoing Member** - Patty Pasley stepped off the FCC in early January.
    b. **Commissioner Recruitment** - Names have been proposed for possible candidacy.
    c. **Budget Update** - 2024 financials have been shared with FCC; FCC utilized $1,401 of the FY 2024 FCC $1,500 operating budget. Details of Town Forest Reserve and ARPA fund expenditures are included in the reports. Brian and Andrea met with the Selectboard on December 4, 2024 to present the FCC budget request and APRA funds utilization, including full utilization of the amount allocated for the Pilot Knotweed Project, remaining amount of the funding allocated to McCullough Barn to be utilized for picnic tables, and planned use of the funds allocated for Wildlife Crossing with Arrowood. Brian explained that FCC has received only one bid regarding updating the management plan for Chase Brook Forest. Birdseye Consulting did just complete Moretown's plan and the FCC is confident in their work and hoping to move forward.
        - Selectboard minutes from December 4, 2024 indicated that the Selectboard approved the ARPA funds that had been allocated to the FCC. The Secectboard is proposing level funding of the Conservation Reserve Account #8011 in the amount of $3,500 and Town Forest Reserve Account #8016 in the amount of $12,000.
        - Selectboard discussed if the Town Forest Reserve was the appropriate line item for the FCCs operating budget, since it is for capital reserves. Will level fund the line item for this year, but the FCC should spend down the Town Forest Reserve money, and we should establish an operating budget

line item for the FCC in 2026.
    - The Selectboard met on December 30, 2024 with a warned hearing on the projected capital reserve for the next six years.
    - Brian and Andrea will meet with the Selectboard on January 28, 2025. All FCC is encouraged to attend.

d. **Fayston Tax Exempt Certificate -** Sarah Stravasky forwarded Fayston's exempt certificate to Lamoille Woodworking for the McCullough Barn picnic table purchase.

e. **Zoom and Meetings** - Looking at setting up a better zoom link for FCC

f. **Newsletter** - Brian will facilitate this effort on a quarterly basis and members will collaborate on content.

5. **Project Updates**

a. **Chase Brook Management Plan Subcommittee Report** - Amy will be reaching out to Michael Brown in order to establish a timeline for work to commence this Spring. Pete and Amy will meet to develop a survey to solicit public feedback. We will attend Mad River Riders and Catamount Trail Association meetings in order to follow up on a request for stakeholder feedback/input. We will also follow up with Fayston Elementary School for feedback.

b. **Chase Brook Maintenance** - Amy will coordinate with former member and now volunteer, Patty Pasley on CB maintenance. Patty has committed to continuing with her maintenance work at this site. Picnic table has been ordered from Lamoille Woodworking utilizing ARPA funds to replace old and rotting tables.

c. **Boyce Hill** – Woody & Pete - Apple tree pruning workshop to be held Feb 15. Cultural history film by VMN filming scheduled for April 17 (rain date 4/29). Karrie Thomas with Northern Forest Canoe Trail has offered to help build stone steps to brook.

d. **Invasives/Knotweed** – Andrea - Meeting of Valley CCs and UVM collaborators Jan 6 to plan for the coming year. Last year's intern, Jack Lentz, has accepted the role of project coordinator for 2025. VLT webinar with Valley CCs and UVM collaborators, scheduled for Feb 26, 2025, 12-12:45 https://vlt.org/events/untying-the-knot/

e. **Conservation and Recreation Visioning** - Brian - recent meetings have focused on where CRV will be housed, the need for a point person for CRV and what its goals are for 2025 and beyond.

f. **MRV Bear Initiative** – Town report submitted (live links available). FCC made the annual $500 contribution to the initiative. Story contest will extend into summer and be promoted at the summer farmers market in order to bolster participation. 2025 MRVBI budget includes funds for bear proof toters and receptacles to be purchased for various locations in the valley together with other MRV organizations.

g. **Wildlife Corridors** - Brian & Andrea - no updates since end of year. Contract signed with Arrowwood Consulting.

h. Other - n/a

6. Other business

7. **Items for next month's agenda** - interest in a tri-CC meeting for the spring? Update other CCs on ARPA funds (Brian to update others)

Next Meeting: Feb. 26, 2025 at 5:45pm. Brian made a motion to adjourn. Pete seconded.