

Friends of the Northern Rail Trail January 19, 2022

Condensed from draft minutes.

Board Attendees: Alex Bernhard, Amy Chan, Barbara Couturier, George Heaton, Lindy Heim, Cody Hussey, Dustin Ladd, Charles Martin, Myra Mayman, Ricker Miller, Don Moyer, Jack Shields.

Committee Member: Patrice Rasche
Business Matters

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Dustin Ladd's presentation offered a proposed 2022 budget for Board approval. The budget is the result of considerable discussion in the committees, as well as Dustin's much-appreciated effort to bring it together in a budgetary format. Recognizing that the budget provides a flexible template for the year rather than a restriction, approval was enthusiastic and unanimous.

In addition, Dustin presented the usual monthly Treasurer's Report showing bank balances, funds expended, and allocations for the future. These show FNRT ready to embark on new projects in the spring.

Correspondence: A letter and donation of funds was received from Dick MacKay, long-time President of FNRT-Grafton County. As the Grafton County organization has been merged with Merrimack County into a single entity for promotion of the Trail, Dick sent its remaining funds to FNRT. We say, "Thanks!"

Committee Reports

Trail Building and Maintenance: In addition to its recap of budgetary needs for 2022, Don Moyer's report covered several discrete building and maintenance issues on the Trail, as follows:

Lawrence Street Tunnel (Andover): This project's experiment with solar lighting has been judged impractical and is terminated. Paving to improve the tunnel surface has in fact solved much of the problem of an undulating surface and large stones.

Grafton County Top Priorities: the Enfield Lakeside Park Bridge refurbishing and the Mascoma Stone Cut repaving need take highest priority among the several Grafton County projects now being planned.

RTP Grant Application: Plans are being made and contractor estimates solicited for various Grafton County resurfacing projects, including Potato Road, US Route 4 underpass near Tunnel Road, and the Indian River bridge. We expect this application to be submitted by the June deadline.

Boscawen Trail Extension: Plans for removal and disposition of the rails in the .6-mile Boscawen extension are being discussed with the relevant parties. (Since the meeting, New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has given notice that they

intend to keep the rails.)

Trail Counts: In connection with the New Hampshire Rail Trail Plan, currently being developed by a committee led by NHDOT, FNRT has been asked to estimate annual visits to the Trail. Current counters at a few locations give partial data, from which a "best estimate" extrapolation of 120,000 to 150,000 visits per year could reasonably be inferred. Impressive!

Technology Committee: Befitting the Technology Committee, Chair Cody Hussey's graphic presentation of FNRT's tech portfolio illuminated, elucidated, and raised new questions for the Board.

Of top importance at the moment is website migration. With Cody's recommendation being Squarespace. Others supported this platform as suitable for FNRT's needs. Its initial and continuing cost is being considered.

The email system has migrated to Microsoft 365, which is a free service. Digital maps have emerged as the #1 interest in our Newsletter, and these also require no budget. The current payment arrangement with PayPal, as well as donor management software, were also considered.

Lastly, there was considerable discussion of the FNRT "brand," particularly the design of our logo, and the need for modernization both of logo design and transformation into a vector-based image. The expertise in this arena is often hard to locate and expensive, but some volunteer possibilities will be pursued.

The resolution of these various issues – most especially the question of website migration – will be postponed until the March meeting.

Other Committees: Both the Finance and Administration Committee and the Marketing and Promotion Committee had met during the month and sent reports earlier to the Board. As there were no questions or comments on either report, these were not further discussed in the meeting.

Other Developments

Boscawen Extension: Recent reports from our Counsel confirm continuing progress at the State level, as various approval processes among various parties – NHDOT, the Governor and Council, PanAm Railways, and FNRT – continue to move forward.

Historic Signage: Dick Mackay, former Chair of the Grafton County FNRT, has proposed an initiative to develop historic signage along the Trail and is seeking others to join him in this effort. Anyone interested should contact Dick at DickMackay@comcast.net.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 16, at 5 PM via Zoom.

Wilmot Farmers Market Plans for Summer 2022 Season

Returning vendors' deadline is March 5

Press release

The Wilmot Farmers Market Board of Directors is busy building the vendor base for another successful summer season. The 2022 season will operate from 9 AM to noon on the Wilmot Town Green every Saturday starting on June 25 and running through September 24.

Returning vendors who submit their applications by Saturday, March 5 are assured of their spot for the upcoming season. Remaining spots will be filled by new applications received after this

date. Vendors can be full time (11 to 14 weeks) or part time (a commitment of at least three Saturdays).

Information about becoming a vendor, including applications, are available by contacting Laura Kilkenny (Info@OffABitFarm.com or 603 530-2496). Contact Donna Sprague, Board Chair, for general market questions at WilmotFarmersMarketNH@gmail.com.

The market is a great place to socialize, enjoy the music, and find high quality products while supporting your local businesses and neighbors. Visit WilmotFarmersMarket.com for updates on our vendors, music, and activities for the season.

Kearsarge Area Senior Luncheon Canceled for March

Hope to resume luncheons in April

Press release


Out of concern for our seniors, the March 2022 Kearsarge Area Senior Luncheon in Wilmot Center has been canceled.

Organizers of the popular senior luncheons hate to disappoint the 40-plus guests who love getting together monthly to share a hot meal and each other's company. However the decision was made to cancel the March Kearsarge Area Senior Luncheon in the spirit of caution and out of concern for our seniors' well-being.

Sponsors hope to resume hosting luncheons at the First Congregational Church in Wilmot Center again soon, possibly in April. Those who attended a luncheon in the fall of 2021 will be contacted by phone when luncheons can be held safely. Fingers are crossed!



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