

Town of Rowe Park Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 06, 2025

6:30 PM

Hybrid: In person Meeting Room #1 and Online Zoom Participation

In attendance: Laurie Pike (Park Commissioner), Hannah Poplawski (Park Commissioner), Walter Quist (Park Commissioner), and Briel Gibson (Park Manager).

Audience of Citizens: Andrew Randazzo (Mass Audubon), Jerry Dupree (Indianhead Snowmobile Club), & Joe Coppola (Indianhead Snowmobile Club)

Called to Order: 6:33 PM

Request that anyone who is recording the meeting inform the rest of the attendees.

Review budget for meeting with finance committee

1. Briel submitted the budget before the holidays. Hannah and Briel will attend the Finance Committee on February 6th, 2025.

Discuss current status for operations plan project

1. Andrew provided an update on the Operations Plan. He spoke with Mike Downey, who administers the Community Forest Stewardship Grant, earlier today who is happy with the additional details Laurie and Alex provided. The Grant will be awarded later this week.
2. The Cutting Plan was approved by default but Andrew is still going to ask for a signature from the State.
3. Everything is all set with the requirements for the Endangered Species Act and the tricolored bat.
4. The prospectus is the next step. This provides an opportunity for Alex to show the site to interested bidders. There are a couple operators Alex and Andrew would like to invite to this showing.
5. Andrew shared a spreadsheet that broke down the funding and all the sources (CDS allotment, NEFF-USFS Allotment, Woodlands Partnership Allotment, CFSG Allotment, Timber Revenue, & additional funds). He will send us a copy of this document.
6. The Longview Forest team will be on site tomorrow to cut the beech saplings. This prepares the site for the operators so they can easily go in and remove the larger trees.
7. Laurie will write an update for the February Goal Post to remind residents this project is taking place now.

Review spring 2025 Woodlands Partnership grant projects to be completed by June 30, 2025.

1. Andrea Hopkins has designed a first draft of the Old Growth Habitat Trail booklets for us to review and provide feedback on.
2. Laurie suggested we hike the trail and tag the corresponding sections so we can possibly take new photos and so we have a reference for plaque locations to go along with the booklet.

3. It was also suggested we create a QR code so the booklet can be accessed online. The QR codes could be added with a weatherproof sticker to the brochure box and available at the park headquarters, library, and town hall. Hardcopies will also be available at the previously listed places.
4. Walt suggested we have an easel at the library with a display for the Old Growth Habitat Trail and booklet or to display other exciting projects we have going on at the Park.

Discuss possible temporary installation of beach kiosk sign.

1. The white board has not been used much over the winter so we could temporarily remove that and install the beach kiosk sign there until the kiosk is in place. Briel will also check spacing as it may be possible to mount the sign beside the white board.

Davis Mine Bridge replacement and Mass Trails grant

1. Laurie has not heard back from the Longview Forest trail team since the initial conversation so she will reach back out to them.

Meet with representatives from the snowmobile club about bridge replacement on Kings Highway Trail.

1. Jerry Bupree and Joe Coppola introduced themselves as members of the Indianhead Snowmobile Club and described their concerns regarding the bridge that was removed this past summer on Old King's Highway. This is an important trail for connecting Heath, Rowe, and Charlemont, and without the bridge the washout from the stream makes it difficult or impossible to move through that section of trail.
2. Briel walked with Joe Sunday to brainstorm ideas for a temporary trail bypass. It is possible to make a short bypass without major cutting, Briel said she could cut a few small beeches and already downed trees to make an alternative path.
3. We will all go out Wednesday, January 8th at 1PM to walk and mark the temporary route.

Special town meeting to transfer truck funds to the highway department.

1. It's possible there will be a special town meeting later in January and Laurie has asked that Boone adds to the warrant the transfer of the truck funds to the Highway Department.
2. Briel will reach out to Lance and ask if we can get the truck looked at by Adam at the Green Garage to make sure it is running smoothly.

Unforeseen Business:

1. The Council on Aging is hosting February and March Madness exercise classes with Deb Lively every Monday and Wednesday. They are also purchasing a TV for the fitness center.
2. Laurie suggested we lock the tennis courts to prevent use prior to the final snowmelt.

3. Briel has a phone call scheduled with the Franklin Land Trust regarding the D2R2 bike race. This is scheduled for August 23rd, 2025 and they hope to use the Park as a lunch and water stop again.

Minutes for this meeting were approved by roll-call vote on February 3, 2025.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted by,

Hannah Poplawski
Park Commissioner