**Tucker Mountain Town Forest Management Committee**

***Draft Minutes***

**What:** Minutes

**When:** March 4, 2019, 6:30-8:00 PM

**Committee:** Tom Kidder - Co-Chair, Dianne Norton - Co-Chair, Kirk Morrison, Kathy Damon, John Nininger, Andrea Franklin

**Guests**: Bob Linck, David McMath and Tracey Zschau from the Vermont Land Trust

**Public**: Michael Thomas, Newbury Conservation Commission, chair

* 6:35: Dianne Norton moved the meeting to order
* Dianne moved and Kirk seconded to accept the 2/11/2019 minutes with the following amendment:
	+ Kathy will not be able to attend the March 15 and **April 1** meetings.
	+ Passed unanimously
* Kick Off Meeting with VLT
	+ Bob Link, David McMath and Tracey Zschau from the VLT introduced themselves
		- Tracey Zschau is the Land Trust Conservation Director focusing primarily on policy, funding sources, the mission statement and strategies.
		- Bob Linck is the Central Vermont Director and has been the VLT point person for the Tucker Mountain project.
		- David McMath is the Regional Stewardship Manager and will lead the boundary walk this spring.
	+ Bob reviewed the VLT Town Forest Conservation Easement Summary which is the basis of the **Amended and Restated Grant of Development Rights, Conversation Restrictions and Public Access Easement** for Tucker Mountain.
		- This provides the statement of purpose for the VLT easement--why we are doing what we are doing and what needs to be considered when developing a management plan.
		- The management plan is central for Tucker Mountain and will drive the relationship between the town, which owns Tucker Mountain, and VLT.
		- This is an amended and restated document from the original easement the VLT had with previous owners. This amended and restatement easement includes the original 437 acres that were already conserved and the additional parcel of land that was not in the original management plan.
		- A Forest Management Plan will be part of the Management Plan.
		- A special note to Sections 12 and 13 of the document: allows for ATV and motorized vehicles with appropriate plans. ATV and motorized use is not the issue, but potential land damage is the concern.
		- A couple of other notes of interest:
			* The previous owners have permission for a memorial plaque to parents and a memorial stone to mark the area for family ashes.
			* There is a spring on the property, and adjacent property owners, the Blake family, have a well on the Tucker Mountain property just over the boundary which they have been granted the right to use. This right is to be renewed annually. There was some discussion regarding the renewal process which VLT will research and clarify.
			* The Narowski’s have the rights to a sugar bush access on the north end of the property. This is a limited license for use which is renewed annually with the town. The right is not transferable.
	+ Brief discussion regarding a UVM Forestry Extension Grant that was used by 10 Vermont towns for a study group with a recreation focus. Bradford was one of the 10 towns. There are possibly some insights from this study that could be Useful to us.
	+ The VLT has set aside $5,000 that can be used to assist with developing our management plan. Could be used to facilitate public involvement in building the management plan
		- Do we want to do a public survey before crafting a management plan? Get involvement right from the beginning.
	+ Question and Answers to VLT
		- How do we control vandalism?
			* Gates at both ends of the property is a good start
			* It is hoped that public ownership of the land will change perception of the property. A collective responsibility. Self-enforcing.
			* Education
			* Signage
		- How should the vernal pool safety zone be managed. There is an old woods road that runs nearby. This will be looked into further in the spring.
		- How should the Forest Management Plan be managed?
			* There are currently 2 forest management plans, one of which expires in 2 years and one which expires in 8 years.
			* The plans should be reviewed because perhaps there are other uses for the forest now that it is no longer in current use.
			* Perhaps Tucker Mountain could be used as a demonstration site for forest management with organized group visits to harvest sites under the leadership of the County Forester.
		- What about applying for a $5K Express Grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to go toward view clearing on top?
			* This should be part of the forest management plan, perhaps it is already there.
			* Need to consider invasive species control. Barre Town Forest could provide a model.
			* Involvement of River Bend Career and Technical Center.
		- What sources are there for signage?
			* Andrea advised that AMS has signage assistance available
		- What about marking the boundaries?
			* Dave advised that some of the boundaries are hard to identify.
			* Andrea advised that AMC practice when walking the boundaries is to notify and invite abutting landowners to join.
		- There was a restatement of the relationship of the town and VLT. VLT owns the easement that has restrictions. Instead of including restrictions in the easement, the town will develop a Management Plan with the ultimate goal of preserving and protecting the land, to protect the public investment in Tucker Mountain.
* Other Business
	+ Skype connection is available.
	+ Michael Thomas advised the group that Keith Wakefield of the Newbury Border Riders snowmobile club will be holding a fund-raising cookout on Tucker Mountain this Saturday if anyone from the committee wanted to make contact.
		- Andrea advised that there may be grants available for coordinated efforts between snowmobile groups and towns.
	+ Tom advised the group that Jeremy is resigning from the committee because he is moving out of town. We will take our recommendation for a replacement to the selectboard. The group was asked to contact Tom or Dianne with suggestions.
* Dianne moved and John seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:30. Passed Unanimously.

Submitted by: Kathy Damon