

TOWN OF PELHAM

6 Village Green
Pelham, NH 03076

PELHAM FORESTRY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES – **NOT APPROVED**

MONDAY
06/26/23
7PM-9:11pm

PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT:
Sherburne Hall, 6 Village Green, Pelham, NH 03076

Attendance

Committee Members

Mike Gendreau
Raymond Brunelle
Paul Gagnon
Linda Irish-Simpson
Bob Lamoureux

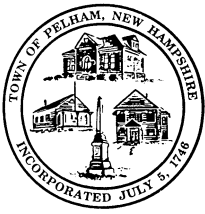
Start of Meeting – 7PM Pledge of Allegiance

April 2023 Meeting Minutes: Minutes approved for both the FC meeting on 05/22/23 & FC site-walk on 05/31/23. Bob L stated that they are the most accurate meeting minutes he has ever read. (Vote: motion Bob L to accept the meeting minutes. Second Paul G
Yes - 5 & No -0)

Open Forum: Tim Kennedy asked if Paul G was going to address the logging/landing site from the timber harvest at Cutter Merriam. Paul G responded that the short answer is “it should be done next week”. The crew will be coming back to remove the crushed stone then pull the logs across the landing until the next timber harvest.

Dale Gallaher referred to the meeting back in April and wanted to comment on trail markers that he and his wife have installed. He explained their process about how to prevent people from getting lost. Explained many hikers in town have no experience. He stated if others are going to put up trail markers to please keep that in mind. He went on to say he recently hiked Cutler Spaulding and that he noticed many trail markers have been taken down. He said the same was at Costa and he and his wife reinstalled. He claimed people were taking them down. Bob L wanted to make sure he was aware that FC is not taking them down. Mr. Gallaher stated he believes it is somebody who has been walking the trails for 50 years and didn't like them and took them down.

Michelle Cooke followed up with the site walk on May 31st and waited to hear about the puncheon bridge. She said there are tire tracks in the trails and mentioned to Ray B that they are not from Fish and Game but from 2 dirt bikes which almost hit her while she was waiting. She took videos and pictures but didn't run out to call the police. She claimed they were little kids on dirt bikes. Ray B mentioned that it was great she got some pictures/videos and that there is a shot that in the future that there are going to see some tracks. There was some back and forth on damage about how to rectify some troubled areas. Ray B suggested that this area get patrolled where she suggested cameras. Ray B stated the town cannot enforce anything from those cameras (just like her pictures). Bob L stated it might be worth getting the opinion of a soil scientist Mark West before we do anything.



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Trail Cameras: Chief Perriello attended our meeting to address the cameras feed the police department. She felt that they are not as effective as they could be. She wasn't sure if is a breakdown in communication. She felt that they are not even getting motion on anything. She did say they were able to get details on people opening some gates. They had the combinations but not on any committees. They ID'ed one of them but not the other. She said these cameras are the last thing that the dispatchers are doing. She mentioned the storage gets clogged and had her daytime dispatcher go in at times to clear the storage. She mentioned the only thing they really find are deer. She went on to say that it is very rare they get real-time info out of this. Here opinion was this. The effectiveness for immediate response she does not believe is there. If they can get some pictures of something like tearing up property, she said then that is very effective because it gives them something where, what they look like etc. Eventually someone runs into someone & can come to fruition with some evidence. She felt it should come up to the opinion of the board if we want to continue. She said she is not getting much info out of it. She said regarding OHRV enforcement they are doing their best to monitor the trails. She has met with Paul G a couple times, put gates up and she wanted to put on record if you see something to call the police right away. She felt they will eventually find people although they lack the manpower. They will take their side-by-side to targeted areas. The more calls they get, the more calls Fish & Game will get to help monitor. Without calls they have no idea about things. Bob L asked about a report in front of the conservation committee and asked if there is a big problem and getting calls and/or Fish & Game. Chief P said they had a meeting and discussed that calls were going to committees and not to the police and asked again to call them. She said they will take a report over the phone and connect them to an officer. They will allow pictures via email to start creating a report. She went on to say initially they started seeing an increase and has fallen off a bit but had no exact stat. She said she could get a report to us. Mike G asked if she could send it to him, and she said yes. Ray B chimed in on the use of cameras and effectiveness. She said there are not any specific areas of concern right now so wouldn't recommend anywhere at this time. Mike G asked if the memory chips can be brought to the PD, and can they review what is on them? She said they can. She referenced the street signs that can be moved. Mike G then asked about the 2 people that were caught on camera going through the gates (unlocking them). He asked what the date was, and she said a very long time ago and was before the new system in place. She went on to say she sent an email out to us that PD and FD are not responsible for the codes. She said those agencies need access to them via phone call and writing if they are changed. The locks cannot be cut and would require them to dismantle the gates but would deter emergency response. She went on to say they don't mandate gates but will not support boulders & rocks blocking trails. Paul G said they ID'ed who went through the gate and drove ATV's. Paul G asked what happened to the people and they were spoken to. She wasn't 100% sure but felt the combo went from person to person to person. They were warned for trespassing. No damage was done. She said that they carry 25 lbs. worth of equipment, but their biggest tool is communication. She gave some examples of how communication works. Paul G asked about the



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2nd person but no one was ID'ed and no damage but was from an ATV again. Paul G said the camera was pointing up towards the sky and that was why there were no pictures. He then asked if there was a way to notify the dispatcher to be aware of the "pings". She didn't have an answer and said Brian Demers would be the one to speak with and that she can follow up with him. Paul G brought up a lock that was removed at a gate at Spaulding Hill Road. It was reported that a lock was removed and two days ago it was missing. A discussion was held on how the codes are handled via Brian Zahn with a contractor temporary code. Chief Perriello said she was not aware of a contractor's code. Paul G said he would take on that action item and report to us next month. Mike G mentioned a conversation he had with Brian Zahn, explained his SOP. As far as the Spaulding lock initially Paul G stated it had to be someone who owned land up that way but quickly said he couldn't be sure. His assumption is that whoever owns land knew the code and decided to take the lock off. Linda I-S said she spoke to Brian Zahn, and it was not a contractor lock, and the real lock was the one missing. Paul G restated that PD and FD need all codes including contractor. Mike G said no one on this board wants to hold any codes back from PD & FD. Chief P said that her officers and members of the FD have standing orders they are not to give them out but restated they are not regulated by their departments. She echoed that FD feels the same way. She said their main goal is having quick access to helping people. Bob L stated that he has heard from a lot of people that they don't want to be filmed. He stated that anyone who has game cameras can bring down their memory cards at any time and they can view them, and he felt we should just stick to that but stated when we have an issue/problem that they go out. Bob L felt we should not have cameras as it is a violation of privacy. Linda I-S asked how do people know where they? Bob L said they wouldn't but would be added strategically as needed. Linda I-S felt if they act as a deterrent that we should continue. Mike G asked her where we should put them. He brought up specific areas if there were problems. Bob L said we all know who the people are, it's a small town. Him and Paul G talk, talk to police, kids grow up and eventually stops. Then on to the new kids in town. Mike G circled back to the cameras being fed into the police station. Ray B asked for the cost (\$240/year). Mike G felt what's important is where do we place them & who is checking the cameras (if getting messed around with). Bob L felt we should rely more on people who already have cameras out there (private citizens) & address it as needed. Paul G said that no one has ever put trail cams up. He felt we would never put them up & that if we want to try to deter ATV's and dirt bikes the money is a small amount and that we should see if we can get them to work better for the PD. He went on to say that if members do not want to put trail cams up then we are sending a message that we are asking for ATV usage. Ray B referenced what the Police Chief said about not finding massive amounts of wheeled vehicles, but he is a proponent of keeping them in place and moving them around if we have substantiated areas of issue. Paul G agreed and brought up a property owner on Dutton Rd who is having issues with wheeled vehicles and will block the trails with trees so ATVs can't come through. Bob L revisited that they can't prosecute, and Paul G said they might be able to ID the person and can talk to them. Mike G said this sounds like an area we may be able to use a camera. Bob L said he already has cameras. After the vote Mike G to reach out to Brian Demers and asked if there is anything he can do to make the hiccups along the way less. Paul G did want to confirm that the camera Nick Spanos was supposed to take down was taken down. It was confirmed it was and the camera is at Nick Spanos's house. There were two and the other one has been moved.



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VOTE: motion Linda Irish Simpson “We keep the cameras for another year and move them around to wherever we need to put them” Paul G second. (VOTE 3-2)

Natures Way Parking Area: In discussions with the homeowners at the end of Natures Way there were bushes planted originally and ½ are dead. Mike G suggested we come up with a game plan to possibly remove them and plant something different for the activity that happens in that area. Currently the homeowners are tending to the lawn, but the shrubs are just an eye sore. What we don’t know is where the lot-lines are before we can do anything. Bob L mentioned he and Paul G talked about it and at one time there was a marker, but it is gone. He felt we shouldn’t be doing anything until we can determine the lot lines. Bob L said he would look to find someone who can do that for us. Ray B thought the homeowners at the end of the cul-de-sac had been there for a long time and wondered if they knew their lot lines, but Bob L said they are relatively new to the area. Paul G agreed it would be best to hire a surveyor to find a couple of points. He suggested that if we pay to replace the shrubs that perhaps we can approach the homeowners and that perhaps they would pay to find their lot-lines and we can replace the shrubs. He felt it would be a win-win for both. Mike G said he could reach out to the landowner but also felt since we all have experience in the town that we could recommend someone. Linda I-S said the reason that the shrubs have died was due to the evasion plant called “bittersweet”. She feels if we put another bush, it will likely be the same problem and perhaps some trees. Paul G mentioned that the homeowners are maintaining that land and we are very appreciative. No motion but to explore this further on finding someone to find the lot lines then can replace the dead bushes.

Site-Walk Review: Mike G reviewed the condition of them & what would need to be done to fix them. He was asking if anyone watching may be wanting to place a bid and/or volunteers. Mike G spoke of the growing volunteer list but will still need someone to more or less be a GC. Ray B asked to have Mike Taylor price it out with labor and materials. He also said would be a good fall project. Bob L mentioned a call came in for the far end of Moose Pond where there is a bridge damaged. There is also another bridge about 100 yards in where all the decking is lifting and should get attention sooner than fall. Once we get labor and materials list, they can come up with an action plan.

Merriam Farm Trail Improvement Ideas: Chris Gallaher explained the history of when she became a trail adopter in this area. She said the trails are used “heavily” with a tremendous amount of use. She mentioned a social media page where there are hikers asking, “if these trails will be made handicap accessible, will they be suitable for scooters& so forth”. She explored the idea to make them handicap accessible which she felt would require concrete and/or pavement. In a conversation with Brian Zahn, She detailed what he suggested and stated the cost would be approximate \$1,045 for 150 feet. She didn’t think doing 1.6 miles would be doable and/or very costly. She thought perhaps \$10,000 to \$12,000 (project) to see how far we could get. She asked if there is an interest in the FC committee and she would come up with a better estimate. She optioned out some different distances. She was told this would have to be done in the Spring. She stated again that this would be an asset to the easiest of any trails in town. She asked for consideration and would explore it further. Linda I-S said she liked the idea and asked the



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distance from parking lot to bluebirds. Chris did not know but felt we would need to do around 1/3 of a mile. She would need a wheel for the distance and work on volunteers. Ray B feels less is more when it comes to filling in areas. He said he has seen a lot of activity on Mammoth and Sherburne Road with non-NH plates (out of state). Ray B mentioned that we have no studies on how many people will this benefit and that by doing something like this he compared to the rail trials. He doesn't like taking the "nature out of it" by doing something like this. Chris G said it would not be paved and would not comply with ADA but easier with strollers, walkers etc. Ray B said he is not in favor of disrupting the natural trails at this time. Ray B said she does not have her support and feels the trails should be left as natural as possible. Paul G chimed in saying he sees Ray B's point and agrees with it largely. He also mentioned that we have a lot of money that we need to challenge ourselves to do more and being criticized for not allowing more to be done on our properties and this may be an opportunity to get our feet wet. Paul G stated how he enjoys hiking and wants a natural experience. Paul G said what Ray B said rings true to what he said. He also brought up that we may end up with \$10,000 to \$12,000 from a future timber harvest. Suggested dedicating the new funds to this on an experimental basis. Bob L said it doesn't matter if we dedicate it or not it all comes from the same place where Paul G immediately said, "you're right Bob, you're right". Paul G talked about some numbers and didn't have an exact thought on what to do and said we do not have a big project coming up. Said we are not a bank and money should be used effectively. He suggested we leave the idea open and explore it further with more details from Chris G. Bob L said that it was not our intention to kill the idea. Bob L brought up a former project over on Veterans Park and how it turned out to carry an intense amount of requirements. Chris G stated this would not be ADA but mentioned that we are currently spending a lot of time with snowmobile bridges and gravel saying this is being done to make things less muddy. She said that if there is not support from the committee to help and underserved population then she would (waved her hands to one side). Ray B asked to add Paul G made a very good point about future projects and brought up a lot of conversation about a community garden (he was not on the board at the time) or something where the town people could congregate and enjoy gardens and community gardens. He felt if we are going to explore walkways then it would be just as plausible to revisit being a community garden. Chris G said she is not sitting here to explore a community garden and it is not in line with the Forest Management Plan. She didn't want to argue it any further. Ray B also mentioned that he has heard from some young kids in town about a bicycle or mountain bike track that all projects should be looked at equally but said if this land is this sacred than the last thing he would want to do is start filling it in with foreign substance. Paul G said he is not opposed to having a conversation about community gardens. He said they were misinterpreted with information which is why he got the push-back. When Al (Steward) brought the idea up in the past he felt the location was not ideal. Bob L said we should stick to this subject. Linda I-S said she would like a little bit more information, Paul G agreed. Bob L he would like to not drop it and carry it on to the next meeting. Mike G said he was also in favor of getting more numbers to review. Can see both positive and negative sides to it. When he asked Chris G to expand, she came back to the mic and said "I'm... I'm gonna drop it, thanks" then went back to her seat.



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Hike Challenge and Kiosk Maps: Linda I-S said we have 1 more person from the month of June to bring us to a total of 30. 22 from Pelham, 5 from out of state & 3 from out of town. Summers are usually slow due to bugs. She said a hike challenge person said the QR Code did not work and reached out NRPC & Ryan did mention at one point the QR Codes would be unsupported due to a new app. She has all the online maps updated with new QR code bringing people to the ArcGIS Field Maps app (old app was ArcGIS explorer). You'll need to delete the old one and install the new one. She contacted the company that did the maps before (at the kiosks) and for all 11 maps would cost \$407.90. They are 17x22, non-fade ink, poly coded. Mike G asked how long ago they were done, she didn't know. She would also like to add that e-bikes are now allowed. We could do them altogether. She had just checked the quote from a company named Keystone Press in Manchester. It is a firm price. Mike G apologized in a miscommunication about the online changes. Ray B wanted to confirm we did replace them ourselves. He felt it was a good investment. VOTE: Paul G motion that "we update the maps as Linda suggested up to \$500". Ray B second. (VOTE 5-0) Bob L thanked Linda I-S for doing this and Mike G and Ray B offered their assistance once they came in.

Trail Posts: Linda I-S mentioned there are 2 trails currently unmarked. Raymond Park needs a post (nowhere to blaze). Mr. Fisher agreed to do this for us. PVMP needs the same thing at the green trail. This also needs a post. James Fisher back and forth with Linda I-S and said they would get together on a vertical post. He will craft them up and we can install them. Mr. Fisher said no cost for doing this. Mike G said we will need to address cleaning some of the trails due to overgrowth.

Cutler Spaulding Timber Harvest: Per conversation with Kevin Cote, it was talked about looking for a different landing but on another side of the Spaulding Hill Road. Roger was ok with it and asked to clean it up when finished. The logger quoted \$15,250 to build this landing area. Paul G felt it would likely cost us money from the timber harvest if we did this. He didn't feel it was a good idea. Paul G felt because we have spent the money per bid, trees marked & we have the plans to enlarge the access area. We have notified the abutters, notified the town and that even though the cost of timber is down it might be worth taking the (estimated) \$12,000. Paul G's position would be to do this. Bob L explained more detail about the timber harvest. Paul G asked that we vote to move forward. Bob L agreed. Mike G asked the number of times the trucks are in and out of the area. Should take a week or two and would be several trips. Bob L explained where the complaints come from and states it is more based on new people in town who have never seen a timber harvest & have no idea what they are. He reiterated it is important to help maintain the healthy-ness of the forest. Ray B brought to the meeting a timber harvest how it looked and how it is now and looks great. VOTE: Bob L "move forward to get this timber harvest going" second Paul G (VOTE 5-0)

Bylaws: Heather is not available at this time. Unable to make the meeting.



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Gate and Codes: Mike G summarized who oversees the gates and determined it is FC. We do not have specifics on Class VI and Class A trails. Mike G read into record email from Chief Perriello (on behalf of both Police and Fire). Mike G does agree minimal people should have access to the codes and his opinion is that FC should have access to the codes in case Brian Zahn cannot be reached in a non-emergency situation. Bob L restated FC is the governing body and that we should be controlling this. Ray B added that in the past several years combo locks were added for various reasons. He said based on his volunteer work from different areas and our reliability on trail work. He felt codes got a little sloppy over the past few years and feels we can correct things by doing things the right way. Linda I-S asked if all members of FC would have codes along with FD and PD and Brian Z. Mike G would like him to keep his system and maybe he will change his mind when we reach out asking for the codes. That's assuming he would still be interested. Mike G felt it would be best if a situation came up where he (or other FC members) have access to the codes. Ray B asked Paul G to see if Brian Z would want to continue handling the locks/contractors. Paul G asked who would have the codes. Bob L said Mike G would have the codes. Paul G asked who would be called for code access. Mike G said he would like Brian Z to maintain handling things if he wants to continue. Paul G brought up giving the codes out judicially. Mike G couldn't agree more. Some back and forth. Paul G said he does agree the law is the law and we do need to give the codes to all those who abut Spaulding Hill Road and others. Mike G asked if we should have a vote. VOTE: Paul G motion to ask Brian Zahn "to continue to manage the contractor locks for the gates. We are not asking him to manage the codes or who decides to get the codes." Ray B second (VOTE 4-0-1 (abstain))

Walk-In Items: Linda I-S said at Costa there was a large amount of wood chips. It's unsightly and asked if there is anywhere, we could use it. Bob L to look and see if there is a way to disperse them. Paul G asked if there was a load to bring them to the trail near his house where there is a depression. Paul G updated on the permit for NHDES. Peter Zohdi's office is going to handle and will need copies of various maps for NHDES & NH Granite. A natural heritage bureau report, list of abutters, certified mailings, site-walks. The cost will be estimated to be around \$800 plus the cost of mailings. He figures around \$1,000. Mike G reminded us we need to appropriate more funds. He asked for someone to take a motion. VOTE: Bob L made a motion "to appropriate \$1,000", Ray B second VOTE 5-0. Linda I-S reminded of an invoice to Full Circle Forestry for \$1,612.50. Bob L had some questions which were addressed. VOTE: Bob L motion "we pay Full Circle Forestry \$1,612.50" Paul G second (VOTE 5-0) Mike G thanked everybody who has been reaching out to help with volunteering.

Adjourn: 9:12PM (Vote: motion to adjourn meeting Bob L, second Ray B G 5-0)