

APPROVED MINUTES  
Springfield Trails and Rural Economy Committee Meeting  
Thursday, March 28, 2024  
5:30 PM  
Town Offices Meeting Room

**Call to Order:**

—The meeting was called to order at 5:32. It was moved that Barb Schultz preside in the imminent absence of Jim Fog (Bond/Gregory). Passed unanimously. Jim Fog departed.

**Roll Call:**

—Present were John Bond, Josie Hingston, Barb Schultz (presiding pro tem), Chuck Gregory and Bettina McCrady.

**Announcements:**

—The committee was told by Town Manager Jeff Mobus that the Department of Transportation has not yet changed its stated intention to re-route the Toonerville Trail to pass across the exit and entrance ramps when the Exit 7 interchange of I-91 is reconfigured.

—Bettina said she will check with the Springfield Co-op about giving us a check for the donations made by customers

**Additions to Agenda:**

—There were no additions to the agenda

Approval of Previous Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as corrected (Bond/McCrady)

**Old Business:**

—Hunting Ordinance status— the proposal has not yet been submitted to the Select Board or the Ordinance Board. It was moved that the committee send a letter to ask the Select Board and Ordinance Committee to consider creation of or amending any present ordinance to prohibit hunting in Hartness Park. (Bond/Gregory). Passed unanimously. Chuck Gregory will draft the letter and forward it to Barbara Schultz for action.

—Committee member recruitment— Barbara pointed out that the Town website specifies a seven-person committee, which means one vacancy can be filled. Bettina mentioned she is in

contact with a possible candidate for one of them. The matter will be taken up again at the next meeting

—Hartness Park Rehabilitation Grant update— Barbara said that she will be visiting the wetlands areas of Hartness Park with the personnel from Agency of Natural Resources this coming Monday, April 1st, weather permitting.

—ST&RE Introductory Guide— Jim and Barbara have drafted the following Statement of Purpose:

*“Statement of purpose: The committee primarily focuses on maintaining and improving Springfield’s trails, greenways, byways, and adjacent areas, with a view to enhancing the educational, cultural and economic life of our town. It also addresses invasive species, barriers to access, and raising awareness about destinations of interest in the rural parts of the greater Springfield region.”*

—Hartness Park gates access update— John Bond said a survey of the area at the Dell Road entrance needs to be done. He has talked with surveyor David Coleman and Town Manager Jeff Mobus about having it done this spring. The main considerations for which of the two entrances — the other being Woodbury Road— seem to be: the suitability of surface for parking, traffic safety for entering and departing, ease of the operation of the gate. John will keep monitoring the situation.

New Business:

—Public Relations efforts in regard to Hartness Park: John Bond asked if we could get the help of Administrative Assistant, Brian Benoit, in publicizing the trails. Bettina said she will talk to reporter Suzanne Stern and the new Parks and Recreation Director. John asked if somebody with computer talent could engage with the committee’s Facebook (reported to have 88 members) page. It was agreed to post frequently on the page; Josie Hingston volunteered to renew this effort. It was stated someone should be appointed to monitor the site constantly for feedback from trail users.

Fund Raising: The committee will continue to be alert to the appearance of grant proposals. John Bond mentioned attending a VOREC zoom meeting. He was the only person from Springfield who attended. He mentioned to them the need to attend to the improvements identified as needed at Muckcross and that Springfield could use more funding for the Toonerville Trail. He will forward his notes of the meeting to the committee members.

The next meeting will be April 18th, at 5:30 PM at the town offices.

The proposed agenda is:

ST&RE Committee Meeting  
April 18, 2024, 5:30  
Springfield Town Offices

Call to Order

Roll Call

Announcements

Approval of minutes of previous meeting

Old Business

- Committee recruitment
- ST&RE introductory guide
- Public relations
- Hunting ordinance status
- Hartness Park Rehabilitation Grant update

New Business

- Status of communication with the Army Corps of Engineers—
- Opportunity to comment on Connecticut River hydroelectric project license

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52.

Respectfully submitted,

chuck gregory, secretary