

Fairlee Town Forest Committee
Meeting held in the Grange Room/Fairlee Town Hall

18 September 2013

Attendance: Peter Lange, Terry Lewis, David Matthews, Jim O'Donnell
No members of the public attended

David called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

Discussed the "Scout" parcel; an area that was set aside to be used for Boy Scout and Girl Scout events. More research needs to be done as none in attendance knew if use was limited to Fairlee scout troops (which, currently, none exist).

The history and management of the three parcels and their respective "bank" accounts is being researched by David. He's read through town reports from 1946 through 1981. He is collecting information but, at this point, is not able to come to any conclusions.

- In the 1970's an Energy Conservation Committee was formed. This committee had the county forester mark low value trees to be harvested for firewood. The committee purchased the trees, had them cut into 4' length and sold the cordwood to town residents for firewood. They earned \$5.00 per cord and used the funds for municipal property energy conservation work. Through 1981, they never earned more than \$200.00 a year.

- one of the problems in the town records is the various terms used to describe our forest products (wood project, logging project, energy conservation, forestry, logging trust fund, lumber). They all seem to be used indiscriminately.

Up to this point in David's research, it seems that the "implied intent" of all the forest revenue be used to support the forest activities. Why else would the Select Board have decided not to deposit the income in the general fund but rather set up "accounts" for each of the three timber parcels?

Budget: The management of the forest will not require any financial assistance from the general fund. Markus Bradley of Redstart expects to have the Forest Management Plan completed by the first of January, 2014. His fee of approximately \$9,600.00 will be prorated across the three timber trust accounts.

New Business:

- Jim spoke with Ernest Kling who told him that he would be cutting again next July on Peter Ackerman's parcel. Jim noted there is another impressive stand of white pine that could be harvested more economically if it were removed across the Ackerman parcel. David will discuss this with Redstart.

- Research revealed that each member of the committee shall serve a five year term and that the terms each be staggered by one year. It was decided that, at least one month prior to the end any term, that the chair bring a candidate's name for reappointment or new appointment before the members of the Select Board.

- Terms are as follows:

Jim O'Donnell	December 31, 2014
Peter Lange	December 31, 2015
Terry Lewis	December 31, 2016
Tim Cramer	December 31, 2017
David Matthews	December 31, 2018

- the chair will request that the select board restrict vehicles from road and trail use within the town forest during "mud season". The board discussed gating the entrances during this period.

- We discussed what may happen if Peter Ackerman or his heirs sold the parcel Surrounded by the Town Forest. Jim will ask him if he'll consider deeding the town

a right of way through his land. He'll also ask if the voters in Fairlee could be given "first right-of-refusal" to purchase the property should it be put on the Market to be sold.

-It was proposed, seconded and voted to spend up to \$1,900.00 (not to exceed 10%) from the Timber Trust Fund for the rental of equipment for the improvement of forest roads to augment next years (proposed) harvest. Jim O'Donnell will oversee the operation. (Jim moved, Terry second, voted in the affirmative)

-Open Acres Ranch, 1478 Blood Brook Road had advertised trail rides, some into the Fairlee Forest. www.openacreranch.com; that is no longer referenced on their web site. There had been some concern that a "for profit" group (i.e. charging for their services) that used the Fairlee Forest might put the town at risk for liable.

Jim O'Donnell discussed the geological history of the Town Forest.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 PM