

**Mt A Steering Committee**  
**July 26, 2023 – Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance:**

Ben  
Naomi  
Robin  
Bob  
Gary  
Zach  
Amelia  
Liz  
Jill  
Josh  
Pete

**Previous minutes:** change Gary's title to assistant super intendent. Pg 2 – change washouts from heavy rain. Accept minutes as amended – all in favor

**Public forum:**

**Correspondence/presentations/requests:**

**Discussion Items:**

- Parking/restroom update: lots completed for the most part and opened June 26. Implemented the use fee on opening day. Have park attendants that monitor lots and perform other duties. Raised \$6,000 from pango parking app. Have sold 19 passes, most are senior citizens (\$1,000). 4 categories of passes (non-york, SB, veterans, senior citizen). Need to reconsider annual rate for next year. This year the rate seems high because we are doing hourly rate and Mt A opened late. Restrooms are not completed yet but are well on their way. Electrical work started – hopefully done by August. Have only seen one car on the road that was parked right by the sign. May want to consider additional signs or cones. Bike rack would be a good addition. Peak season is coming up, waiting for bathrooms to finish to announce grand opening. Feedback via visitor use surveys has been mixed.
- Position updates: Ben is now full time and under town's park & recs funding. His new title is conservation and stewardship coordinator. Naomi's position is now funded from the town's park & recs budget too. Naomi's title is outreach and education coordinator. Pete did re-org of staff structure in parks & rec and changed Robin's title to Parks Natural Resource Manager and raise – also out of parks & rec. Park attendants and trail crew paid by Mt A enterprise fund. Funds that land trusts pay go toward the trail crew. Gary's position update – retires September 28<sup>th</sup>. Then will have new title as natural resource protection officer via York Police Department. Don spoke to trustees saying he will be looking for funding in 2024 - TBC. KWD approved \$20,000 per year for the next two years for patrolling. Would like the idea for it to turn into "conservation officer". The town of York's police department will continue their portion of the funding – will maintain their pledge. Need to ask the state if they would contribute to the position. This request would go up to the colonel. State status: Game wardens are short staffed

down here and Josh has asked for more presence down here. Current Game Warden is Tyler. Request: bridge the gap of less state game warden presence by funding the NRPO position. Will need to do a presentation to the state but this could take a lot of time. Could explore ATV law enforcement grant – YPD has gotten it every year twice a year since 2005.

- Mt. A Park Rules & Regulations – final draft: need to determine if there is one set of rules & guidelines that the NRPO can use when crossing land and boundaries. We haven't looked at that in a while, and have looked at the Park's ordinance draft that is near complete. The town owned or leased property will have official ordinances that are enforceable instead of suggested guidelines. Town's ordinances trump steering committee's guidelines for summit & trails for their land. Land owner has final say. Need to address e-bikes in guidelines (it is in ordinance and trail plan).
- Public Access Signs – updated draft: similar to current access sign which are highlights of guidelines for use with the most important rules. Will be posted at access points besides at kiosks and summit. Discussion re: minor tweaks to verbiage (change to no unauthorized trail maintenance or modification). After discussion, keep area is open year-round from dawn to dusk (because people can hunt at night on state land but that population is minimal in this area and Josh can address any questions). Discussion on geocaching and letterboxing.
- Public Access and Trail Plan – final draft complete. Sent electronic version to committee.

#### **Reports:**

- Stewardship update: gravel fill project on cedar trail to deal with wet spots. Replaced boardwalk on notch that is 6 ft wide (can fit ATV). Got ADA accessible picnic tables at ring trail trailhead. At ring trail crossing – will keep crossing and do re-growth where parking previously was. Had mountain bike trails created on backside of 3<sup>rd</sup> hill in 2020 – closed them and monitored and reopened a month ago (ripped out signs). Most is on state land and YLT property. Have a camera out there. Kenyon Hill connection isn't issue anymore (GWRLT just put in Kenyon Hill parking area).
- Outreach/education update: Ben and Naomi are going to work on creating content on social media for trail management practices and why we do what we do as educational outreach. Field trips are coming up soon. Working on interpretive panels. Lodge: open Friday mornings and have had a lot of foot traffic. Doing 2x monthly guided hikes and first once was really successful. Need to also update brochure map and then when that is done, need to update teacher's packet.
- Misc: US Forest service here and said beech leaf disease is spreading quickly and they are monitoring it. American Chestnuts – some planted at summit and base of cedar trail 12 years ago. One flowered this year for the first time. Women (Lea) here trying to pollinate it.
- Zach's report: Silver trail progress – have made it to KWD border line – upgrading it to a maintenance road for future logging, fire response. Patrol program: one of trustees suggested adding it to the by-laws so it is required of the WD moving forward. Set up a contract across WDs so it is harder to undo. Picking up 105 old mountain road (7 acres) near old center for wildlife. 6 of the acres is in watershed (Mark Richard's property). Plan would be to connect mountain road to porcupine trail.
- Land conservation efforts: Spring trail closure was a success and would consider doing future years on unsanctioned trails. ATV community was enthusiastic about it. Hoping to repair impact

on great marsh trails this year off of old county road. Notification been sent out to road residents and they are in support. GWRLT would like a map of those locations YLT plans to repair on Great Marsh Trail. YLT is looking at a property off of Josiah Norton Road. Timber harvest delayed due to rain.

**New business/future meeting:**

- Next meeting: budget review and guidelines of use

**Next meeting:** September 13, 2023 at 9:30am at Mount A