

*West Newbury Open Space Committee*

**Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Please Join Zoom or In-Person Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8960752005>

Meeting ID: 896 075 2005

**Present:** Graham Bacheller, Jean Lambert, John Dodge, Don Bourquard and Carol Decker, scribe

**Absent:** Marlene Switzer, Patricia Reeser, Jessica Azenaro, David Parrott,

**Guests:** Wendy Reed, WN Selectperson, Michelle Greene, WN Conservation Agent

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

**Funding Trail Projects**

Graham B. and Carol D. met with Michelle G. and part of her job is to be the Land Agent for our Town trail system. She noted that she has no tools to do so and could the OSC budget assist. Wendy R. said money had been spent previously for tools by the last Conservation Agent and she will look at the budget to see what money was spent and also ask the past agent where the tools may be stored. Carol D. said we should promote citizens adopting a WN Open Space area, where they would walk the trails at least monthly or so and report trail needs back to Michelle G. Michelle G. would then organize volunteers to assist with trail needs.

John D. said he had a message in the OSC mail from a concerned citizen who had seen a hunter in a truck driving the RiverBend trail from the Way to the River end all the way to the Orange Trail and parking. John D. suggested a barrier be put up on the Way to the River side. As this is the access for the tractor for mowing and vehicle needs for trail work, Michelle G. said she would discuss installing a locked chain barrier along with signage indicating "No vehicle access permitted" with Wayne Amaral. Carol D. said she would transfer the OSC mail messages to Graham B as new Chair.

Also discussed was the need for updates to trail kiosks and signage. Wendy R. said it would be good if there was consistency as we move forward. Graham B. John D. and Carol D. said they would look at kiosk and signage needs. Approval from the Conservation Commission has already been given to update the rotted sign board at RiverBend.

**Funding Invasive Work**

Carol D. proposed that OSC have a warrant article on the April Town Meeting that would support funding of invasive work by professionals on Open Space properties. Millions of dollars have been spent to secure Open Space, but no dollars have been set aside for management. Invasive plants will continue to degrade valuable resources unless we begin work to control/eradicate them. Interns this summer will be removing invasive plants, but there are areas with invasive plants that will require treatment from a professional applicator. Michelle G. said a NOI will probably be needed and a cost for the mailing will be around \$150. Carol made a motion for the Open Space Committee to propose a warrant article to fund invasive plant management for West Newbury Open Space properties up to \$20,000 for summer/fall 2023 work. Jean L. seconded. Motion carried.

#### **Sawmill Brook Outreach**

There was discussion that outreach/walks on the Sawmill Brook/Austin property will be critical to secure a yes vote for the property at Town Meeting. Greenbelt will make the signs and a few should be posted at Mill Pond at various locations so residents can understand the added trails to the property.

#### **Approve Minutes**

John D. made a motion to approve the December 14, 2022 minutes, the December 14, 2022 Executive Session and the January 19, 2023 minutes. Carol D. seconded. Motion carried.

**Motion to Adjourn:** John D.. made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Don B. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Decker, Scribe