

**Andrews Community Forest Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 18, 2023**

Roll Call and confirmation of quorum: Committee members present in person: Daniel Schmidt, Melissa Wolaver. Committee members attending via Zoom: Cecelia Danks, Chase Rosenberg, Brad Elliott, Ian Stokes, and Julian Portilla (joined at 7pm).

Members of the public in attendance via Zoom: Sam Pratt, Wright Preston, Robert Low, Marcy Harding(7pm) and Jay McCormack. No members of the public attended the meeting in person.

Appointment of Minute Taker: Melissa Wolaver volunteered to take the meeting minutes.
Appointment of Timekeeper: Ian Stokes volunteered to be the timekeeper.

Review November 27, 2023, meet minutes. Cecelia moves Ian seconds to accept the minutes as recorded. All committee members vote yes to accept the minutes.

Additions/changes to the current meeting agenda: None

Updates from Richmond Trails Committee (RTC) and Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC): Updates from RTC focus on Wright Preston's application to the Andrews Community Forest Committee: please see below. RCC update: Also voted on Wright Preston's application: please see below. The RCC is working to install salamander crossing signs, creating an invasive species tool kit, and working on voting that will occur on the reserve fund at Town Meeting.

Wright Preston application to join the ACFC, including recommendations and votes from the RTC and the RCC: The RCC voted unanimously to recommend Wright for the "at large" seat on the ACFC. RCC sent comments which were all positive and spoke to Wrights strengths. Ian read a summary of the attributes the RCC believes Wright will bring to this committee. RTC took two votes on Wright. The first vote was for the RTC representative seat: 0 for and 6 against. The second vote was for the "at large" seat: 3 yes and 3 no. RTC Appreciated Wright's work on VELCO on behalf of ACF, and agreed he was not best person to represent trails committee agenda in the RTC representative seat.

Wright is being considered for the "at large" seat. He spoke about being a steward and advocate for the ACF, and for the public using ACF in responsible ways. No questions for Wright from committee and no questions from public. Comment from Cecelia: Appreciated his knowledge of land and town business and process, as well as being nearby landowner. Brad: Wright is managing a large forest that abuts ACF and has deep forest management knowledge.

Motion to recommend Wright Preston's application for the at large position. Cecelia moves motion, Melissa seconds. A roll call vote is taken on Wright Preston's application: The votes pass unanimously, and Ian will inform Selectboard of decision.

Proposal for a writer to help revise our Management Plan incorporating ACFC recommendations for revisions. We held a wide-ranging discussion on this topic and noted that ACFC has had encouragement from Selectboard for administrative support for ACFC work. We discussed what would that look like, and an RFP to secure funding for a writer.

Daniel: 1). Information is not currently accessible in the MP, especially for the public. Too many links, etc. It would be good to collate all information into usable form. 2). Would like to see MP written with new template that is accessible. Brad offers to write a "bridge" template for the committee to consider. Cecelia: We need to decide what we want as a product. She wants to make sure we have conscious decision and have revisions that show how they are different from original MP with a guide to differences. 2). Unattached stand-alone reports, and references should go somewhere else. 3) Indigenous wording and content have been crafted with people from tribes and should be a real appendix. Wants to make sure this piece stays intact, and she wants to protect the integrity of this work. 4). She wants to sort out maps to appropriate appendix, but not all the proliferation of maps we have now.

Ian: Would like to hire an expert who has already written a management plan. Would like to have subcommittee work with this writer. Chase: 1). Need to assess how much expertise contractor has, and how much background training they will need. 2) is redoing MP delaying further public access? Cecelia: OK to have people on sub-committee who are not ACFC members. Chase: wants to do trail stewardship first. Brad: thinks MP revisions first. Cecelia: MP called for triggering revision if things change. Can't move ahead with just trail stewardship. Daniel: Appreciates robust process and getting things done. Would like to review new Trail Plan revisions from last summer with current committee to get everyone up to speed. Trail plan is one component of MP. Daniel notes that we still want to honor timeline, but zoning and engineering will impact timeline, and wasn't accounted for. We need to make sure we are all on the same page about trails plan. Melissa: Notes that DRB zoning and engineering process should occur concurrent with MP and TP revisions because zoning might impact trail placement. Chase: Administrative support could be used for this purpose. There was some good history from Kaitlyn and Nick in seeking Selectboard feedback into trail plan. Daniel asks Ian to please note for next agenda to have everyone receive the most up to date trail plan for our review. Julian: Would like to include more in depth look at sub-committee products at our next meeting.

Comments from the Public: Bob: Content needs to drive process. Wants us to contact Field Naturalists and others for sub-committee inclusion. Wright would like to see the timeline. Daniel asks Ian to add this to agenda for next time - Review of previous timeline as well as trail plan. Sam Pratt: Suggests reorganization of MP without changing content. Sam Pratt is interested in being on sub-committee as person who enjoys the forest.

Review of quorum and committee process rules: Our quorum is based on 9 members whether seats are filled or not, so our quorum is always 5. For email, we cannot use “reply all” to discuss topics. We have reviewed rules and will abide by them.

Jay Furr and Bard Hill offered process and procedure topics to us, and we have reviewed these. Our preference would be they invite us to Selectboard meetings to share information and check in. We could also check in with Josh if we have questions. Best way forward is to engender trust with Selectboard. Daniel will craft polite receipt of emails and check in.

Next meeting: January 22, 2024, 6pm.

Brad moves Cecelia seconds to adjourn. All in favor.