



# Randolph Community Forest

*Sustainable forestry & traditional uses on 10,000 acres in Randolph, NH*

**Date:** February 7, 2024

**Location:** Randolph Town Hall

**Members Present:** Mark Kelley, Laura Brockett, Tim Mather, Nate Reid, and David Willcox

**Guests Present:** Michelle Cormier (7:09 pm), David DeGruttola from LandVest, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

Mark Kelley called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

- I. Review Minutes of December Meeting  
**On a motion by Tim Mather, seconded by Nate Reid, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January, 2024 meeting.**
- II. Financial Review
  - A. Invoices Received  
Mark Kelley advised that they received three invoices: one for \$1792.39 for LandVest for prep work for the timber sale, one for the American Forest Foundation for dues in the amount of \$205.58, and one for \$75.00 for the membership to the Society for the Protection of NH Forests.
  - B. Payments Received  
There were no payments received.
  - C. Financial Report  
Mark Kelley advised there was no financial report available this month.
- III. USFS Pond of Safety Road Agreement  
Mark Kelley advised that he received the new contract with the USFS and has a couple minor questions that he will send to them. Mr. Kelley advised that he spoke with June Hammond Rowan and they are planning to hold a Public

Hearing in April with the Planning Board. They do have some damage to the Pond of Safety Road to bring to the Forest Service's attention, and the work should be done before the road opens on Memorial Day. Mr. Kelley advised that he would finish reviewing the agreement and then share with members. The contract will be in effect through 2028.

IV. Signs

A. Mark Kelley advised that he spoke with David Doyle, and he did get the Corian donated by DuPont and will have enough for three signs. Mr. Doyle advised that he is hoping to have them done by the end of April. One will be at the end of Randolph Hill Road, one at the Pond of Safety, and one could be at Jimtown Road or another location. The one at the Pond of Safety will be in the same location. Laura Brockett advised that she has not heard back from the Coos County Conservation Commission, however suggested that one of the signs be near John Scarinza's bench. Ms. Brockett advised that she will reach out to the Coos County Conservation Commission again.

B. Small Signs to be Painted by George Brown

Mark Kelley reviewed the list of signs to be painted by George Brown. The list includes: two for Rollo Falls, Deerfly Road, Softwood Road, Vernal Pond Road, Wetlands Road, High Road, Bowman Road, Walker Road, Lowe Road, Waterwheel Road, Community Forest Road, and Randolph Community Forest for the Pond of Safety Road and the Farrar Farm. Tim Mather suggested also doing six "Path" signs to be added to trails. They will also make signs for the Berry's and the Brown's as thank you gifts for the donations of land.

V. EMS Communication Tower

Mark Kelley advised members that they are working on improving radio communication along Route 2 in Randolph, Gorham, and Shelburne for emergency services. They have identified a 4.5 acre lot that used to be owned by the town that could be used for the radio antenna. Mr. Kelley suggested that the Forest Commission could create a gated access, and there is a nice flat spot on the hill. There are not enough downed trees for a larger contractor, however Brian Lamarre has expressed interest in the project, and David DeGruttola will contact him. Laura Brockett shared concerns about negative feedback from the community on the tower, and was advised that it will only be 30-50 feet tall since it will be on a hill. Tim Mather advised that the Randolph antenna is only one portion of the project, as there will be others in Cascade, Gorham, and Shelburne. David Willcox suggested that the land could be given back to the Town at next year's Town meeting.

VI. Forester's Report

A. Third Stewardship Plan - Update

David DeGruttola advised that the inventory has been completed, with a total of 300 points. They took all of the stand types and compiled a list. There were three different groups: post-op stands, young stands, and stands with the potential for management. There is an average of 20 gross cords/acre across acres that they are allowed to operate on, which is good stocking for a forest. In comparing the 2013 plan to today for sugar maple, in 2013 there were 11 million board feet of saw logs and 26,000 cords of hardwood pulp, now there are 18 million board feet of saw logs and 36,000 cords of hardwood pulp. This is a 64% increase in saw logs and a 41% increase in hardwood pulp.

Mr. DeGruttola noted that the changes could be due to different inventory designs, what is used for product specifications, and different programs used for the data. Mr. DeGruttola noted that the property is not aggressively managed, but is being managed well and sustainably. The statistics were good and they are gaining in volume.

Laura Brockett asked if there was any shift toward softwood, and Mr. DeGruttola advised that was never a big portion of the forest.

Mr. DeGruttola stated that for Forest Day this year, he would like to take one of the points close to the road and go through the plot, noting what Forester's look for.

Mark Kelley noted that they will have a Public Hearing in April on the Stewardship Plan, so he would like to see the plan before the March meeting.

B. Logging off Deerfly Road

David DeGruttola advised that the timber sale is going well despite the weather. They plan to be done the first or second week of March. There are some piles of brush left over from last year, however the brush makes good habitat for small critters.

Laura Brockett asked about the seed dispersal that was planned, and Mr. DeGruttola advised they have to scarify the ground first.

VII. Other

A. Written Landowner Permission

Mark Kelly advised that Walter Stone spoke with him about an agreement to cross Town Forest land to connect with snowmachine trails. The Commission noted that if permission was given to one person, it would have to be given to all, and that the Jefferson Motel had also asked about this and was denied. The trails can be accessed by Lowe's.

B. Brown Deed

Mark Kelley advised that the deed has been recorded for the Brown Property.

C. Budget

Mark Kelley passed out copies of the Budget to members. Mr. Kelley noted that this is a transition year, and to consider how money is used this year for next year's budget.

D. Culvert on Jimtown Road

Michelle Cormier noted that one of the culverts has washed away before the bridge. Mark Kelley advised that there is money budgeted for the replacement of culverts on Jimtown Road. They will need to reach out to the activity manager, Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club, about this. It was noted that the Waumbek Methna Snowmobile Club has an agreement with the Gorham club for grooming in this area.

VIII. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.