



Randolph Community Forest

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

Date: December 4, 2024

Location: Randolph Town Hall

Members Present: Mark Kelley, Laura Brocket, Tim Mather, Walter Graff, and David Willcox

Guests Present: Paul Jadis, David DeGruttola from LandVest, Jeremiah Hawkins, and Shelli Fortin, Minutes

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

I. Review Minutes of November Meeting

On a motion by Tim Mather, seconded by Laura Brockett, the Commission voted to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2024, meeting as presented.

II. Financial Review

A. Invoices Received

Seven invoices were received. Two from Landvest: one invoice from October in the amount of \$25,077.16, which includes \$19,000 from the road contractor, and one from November in the amount of \$2,546.75, for monthly work. An invoice was received from Tim Sappington for mounting the new map in the amount of \$40.00. An invoice from Drummond Woodsum was received in the amount of \$93.10 for legal work. The invoice from Brian Lamarre was adjusted and resubmitted in the amount of \$2,800.00. The property tax bill from Jefferson was received in the amount of \$1,184.00. The property tax bill from the Town of Gorham was received in the amount of \$6.06.

Mark Kelley advised that he will check with Chuck Jellison on mowing rates for next year, and advised they will need to keep a closer eye on mowing to be sure it is being done at the correct time and in all the places that are needed.

B. Payments Received

No payments were received.

C. Financial Report

Mark Kelley advised that in comparing the current balances to December of 2020, the checking account is almost the same, and the revolving fund is about \$20,000 less. Kelley noted that they have money in savings, which could be used to bring Elise Lawson back for some wildlife projects.

III. Planning Board Article 19 Recommended Revisions

IV. 2025 Budget Process

Mark Kelley provided a summary of the budget, noting that they are planning for \$110,000 in income from the maple lease, logging, and the potential Fish and Game grant for the Potter parcel. David DeGruttola advised they harvested 1800-1900 gross cords this year, and are allowed 3,000 or 3,600 gross cords. DeGruttola noted that they have never exceeded the allowable amount.

In reviewing expenses, Forest Products Expenses totals \$44,000 and includes sale administration, tree marking, skidder trail mapping, maple lease monitoring, and road maintenance. General Maintenance and Legal is budgeted at \$53,000 and includes spot gravel on the Pond of Safety Road, wildlife transects, two gates, and brush cutting. The Forest Service will be asked for assistance with the cost of the maintenance on the Pond of Safety Road. Wildlife Projects totals \$69,500 and includes habitat improvements, wildlife openings, a river walk, interpretive trail, forest day, iNaturalist projects, and moose habitat. The PILT payments are budgeted at \$16,500 and includes the PILT payment to Randolph, taxes to Jefferson and Gorham, and the timber tax.

The increase in Habitat Improvement was questioned, as it was budgeted at \$4,000 and is now at \$30,000. Mark Kelley noted that this is for work that was planned last year, which will be done next year. Meetings and Consultants also increased from \$2,500 to \$10,000 based on past expenses. Kelley advised that he is trying to reclassify some of the expenses.

On a motion by Laura Brockett, seconded by Tim Mather, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the 2025 Randolph Community Forest budget as presented.

V. Forester's Report

David DeGruttola advised that they have still been active off of Bowman Road. They did have another breakdown, but they are back up and running. They will need to coordinate with Fairpoint to raise a phone line that is too low.

Mr. DeGruttola advised that he has tried to contact Jacob DeBow of NH Fish and Game about the beavers which are causing damage to property. Mark Kelley advised that they would prefer to trap them and relocate them to another area, possibly the Pond of Safety Road.

Mr. Degruttola advised that he has started a dialogue with the State of NH in reference to funding to deal with the Japanese Knotweed on the Farrar property. They should start working on this in May when it starts to come up. Paul Jadis noted that the NH Cooperative Extension recommends covering it with a black tarp and dirt, which should take care of it in three years.

Mr. Degruttola also advised that he has combined the maps of the Maple Tap Lease onto one map, showing the original area and the areas that were added.

Mark Kelley advised that he received a quote for needed repairs to make the building on the Farrar Farm site livable. The quote is approximately \$100,000, and includes remodeling, a boiler and heating system, artesian well, windows, roof, plumbing, electrical, and an entry door. Kelley noted that it is a sizable project and the group will need to decide if they want to invest money into it or not.

Mark Kelley advised that the Town attorney wrote up a Well Easement Deed and Agreement for Bob Ashley's well that is on Randolph Community Forest property. Mr. Ashley will be paying for the legal expenses incurred. The agreement will need to be signed by Mr. Ashley, Mark Kelley, and June Hammond Rowan.

On a motion by Laura Brockett, seconded by Tim Mather, the Commission voted unanimously to allow Mark Kelley to sign the Well Easement Deed and Agreement between Bob Ashley and the Randolph Community Forest on behalf of the Commission.

VI. Backcountry Skiing Update

Mark Kelley noted that an unknown person plowed the parking area that is closed. A note will be sent to the Selectmen about this. Paul Jadis stated that they do have budget for police patrols from NHSP and suggested that they request a patrol of the parking lot, which would be most beneficial on

weekends. Laura Brockett suggested that parking area be for residents only and that a parking sticker could be provided for cars. It was noted that skiing is still allowed in the glades, however the parking area is closed for the winter. No Parking signs will be put up on Randolph Hill Road, starting at the gravel section. Signs will be placed at the beginning of Randolph Hill Road notifying people that the parking area is closed. Jeremiah Hawkins asked if he could install a game camera at the beginning of the parking area, and the Commission agreed. Paul Jadis advised that there is no parking ban in Randolph, and stated that the Selectmen had not yet discussed the no parking area on Randolph Hill Road.

VII. Other

It was suggested that the updated map of the Community Forest be put on the website, and Laura Brockett will take care of this.

VIII. Executive Session

There was no executive session needed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm by general consensus.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, at 6:30 pm at the Randolph Town Hall.