

**TOWN OF SOMERS**  
**Open Space and Trails Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday Apr. 19th, 2021, 7:00 PM**  
**Town Hall Auditorium**

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ann Moses at 7:02 PM

**II. Members Present:**

Ann Moses, Richard Bailey, Dick Hutton, Joan Sears, Patrice and Chuck Carson (via. phone), Dominic Wilson, Mike Blouin, Eileen Blouin and Todd Roland

**III. Audience:** Maureen Parsell (Somers Deputy of Recreation), Michael Maynard and Brad Dolben (Applicants for committee membership), Lindsey Hale, Kinsey Loupe, Emma Chase and Tatianna Arruda (Somers Girl Scouts), and Jane Seymour (Wildlife Technician, CT DEEP and steward for DEEP's Belding Wildlife Management Area).

**IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Patrice Carson to approve the 11/18/2020 Minutes as written. Seconded by Mike Blouin. Motion carried.

**V. Correspondence:** None

**VI. Old Business**

Somers Trails Brochure distribution is still limited due to business Covid restrictions

Dom Wilson suggested that signs including QR codes be placed at trailheads for Somers trails with a link to the trail maps. Trails listed in the brochure but not maintained by OSTC would be included. Maureen Parsell said she would be able to create the QR Codes suitable for placement at the trailheads prior to the next meeting. It was suggested that the laminated sheets be 4" x 4" so they could be mounted on existing map boxes. Dom will review a draft of the signs prior to final printing and lamination.

**PROJECT PLAN REVIEW**

Ann will update the plan to include creation of the QR Codes.

Ann suggested that long term the deteriorating existing Camp Aya Po amphitheater be replaced with an amphitheater facing the old fireplace. Advantages include possible handicap access which is not possible with the old amphitheater and flat ground making access to seating easier. She suggested rustic log benches for seating. Todd Roland also felt this was a good plan.

Somers DPW has improved landscaping around the Camp Aya Po parking area and frontage along the stone wall. Former committee member Pat Boudreau has continued her flower planting mission to beautify the area surrounding the parking area.

Mike and Eileen Blouin have hiked the Bald Mountain trail and reported several blowdowns across the trail in the summit area as well as on the steep trail down the east side of the ridge. An alternate route around the steepest section might be possible. A work party will be scheduled to improve and better mark this trail.

Ann Moses has hiked the Somersville Mill Trail and found it in fairly good shape except for the need for two footbridges and the continuing Japanese knotweed problem. Richard Bailey will create a design and materials list for the two bridges to be reported at the next meeting.

Dom Wilson reported that the north and south forest view trail is in good shape but is still being used by dirt bikes in some areas.

**BUTTERFLY MEADOW**

Lindsey, Kinsey, Emma and Tatianna are creating the butterfly meadow as part of the girl scout Silver Award program. The award program includes planning, acting and sharing phases. Jane Seymour is an adviser for the project. They will remove invasive plants and create signs to inform the public about the meadow and included plants. Each scout gave a short presentation on a sign that they would be creating. The meadow will cover approximately a quarter acre. After visiting the site, Jane Seymour said the area already had many native plants beneficial to pollinators that should be preserved. The meadow will be close to the existing trail but the public will not have access to the meadow. The plan is to dig up the invasive plants, not just cut them. Todd Roland said Somers DPW will remove the invasives from the property after they are dug up. DPW can also apply herbicides to individual invasives that can not be dug out as long as the locations are previously marked. The scouts plan to start removing invasives on Sunday May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 PM. Dick Hutton said the Somers Rotary Club will need a written plan including itemized costs to obtain funding for the project. Because approval may take some time this plan should be submitted in the near future. Design of the signs was discussed. Ann suggested that all the signs have a similar layout. It was agreed the signs should be approx. 12" x 12" except for an introduction sign that might be as large as 24" x 24". Dom Wilson suggested that each

sign include a QR code linking to additional information. Todd said that DPW will mount the signs adjacent to the trail with a view to the garden.

## **VII. New Business**

Michael Maynard and Brad Dolben introduced themselves to the committee. Both are engineers by trade and involved with Somers cub scouts.

Joan Sears made a motion that the committee recommend both be accepted for committee membership. Mike Blouin seconded. Motion carried. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Somers BOS for final approval.

## **VIII. Next Meeting**

The next SOSTC meeting is scheduled for Monday May 17th 2021 at 7:00 PM.

## **IX. Adjournment**

8:43 pm. Motion to adjourn by Patrice Carson, seconded by Dick Hutton. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Bailey

Secretary