

KIMBALL WILDLIFE FOREST COMMITTEE

MEETING Minutes: April 6, 2023; 4:00 PM

Gilford Town Hall Conference Room or Zoom

1. Attendance: Gail Tebbetts, Alexandra Breed, Dan Tinkham, Rebecca Watson, Carl Gould, Sandy McGonagle, Scott Dunn, Pat Bennett

Guest: Weldon Bosworth

1. Approval of minutes – February 9, 2023

Moved by Alexandra Breed; seconded by Rebecca Watson; minutes approved

Note: An amendment to the meeting of February 9 referencing a tree cutting request will be included with item #3 on this agenda.

1. Action on request to cut trees in Kimball Wildlife Forest
2. Continue Work Session: Review and discuss updates to the trail map, demonstration signs and other signs at Lockes Hill Trails.
* Meet with Weldon Bosworth and Nicole Keating from Wayfinder Studio to discuss how they might assist.

Before beginning the Work Session, Sandy noted that Kimball Wildlife Forest has been randomly selected for a tree farm inspection – Kimball Wildlife Forest was the 2019 NH Tree Farm of the Year. In response to this request, Tim Nolan has reminded the committee that its Management Plan is out of date. He has agreed to update the plan and map for $2500. The following request was moved by Alexandra Breed and seconded by Dan Tinkham: **The KWF Committee requests that the Gilford Board of Selectmen authorize $2500 to be paid to Tim Nolan to update the KWF Management Plan.**

 Alexandra asked for some clarification on the tree farm recognition and Sandy agreed to get some information for her.

4. Continue Work Session:

Sandy introduced Weldon Bosworth. She gave him some background on the work of this committee and then outlined our current project and how she hoped he might give us some assistance. Alexandra explained that we had previously contacted Nicole Keating of Wayfinder Studio. Nicole had submitted a proposal to us but has since withdrawn her proposal. Alexandra noted that we hope that, with Weldon’s experience of mapping and kiosk design, he might be able to assist/advise the committee as we work on updating interpretive signs, creating a trailhead kiosk with map, and revising our trail guide. She said she feels we need someone to help us pull everything together.

Weldon suggested that what we are hoping to accomplish is “really nothing” and, while he does not have time to oversee the project, he will be happy to assist us. He suggested it is a matter of creating the wording for your signs, getting them printed, and planning how to display them.

Relative to trail signage, Weldon suggested that as they hike, most people are watching where they are walking not looking up for signs. He suggested that signs should be informative, providing information relative to the spot in which they are located and, in keeping with KWF goals, they should be interesting to children. He suggested that you could combine signs by having one sign that might be used to direct people to look for other specific signs along the trail.

 Once you decide what you want on your interpretive signs, he recommended putting them on PowerPoint and saving them on a PDF. Those files can then be sent directly to the printer you choose, such as MegaPrint or Gator signs. Some trail signage can also be found on line, already made up. Signs can be made of different materials such as metal, foam or some all-weather material.

There was also discussion about ways to display the signs. Some signs might be attached to trees. Some might be mounted on a pedestal perhaps with a frame. Carl reminded us of our past discussion to identify the Ossipee mountain range peaks at the top of the Lakeview Trail. Weldon suggested the use of a pedestal with a profile of the skyline or a photograph with the names of the peaks. Hikers might also be directed to use an app such as PeakFinder.

Creation of a kiosk at the trail head was discussed. Weldon suggested that the first task is to determine what to include in the kiosk as that will help determine the size needed. He noted that the kiosk should contain general information, rules for the trail, and maps. Use of QR codes or references to specific apps to use on the trail might also be included. There was discussion around the use of QR codes and linking them to a website. Someone suggested a link to the Belknap Range Trails website. Weldon mentioned that we might design our own website at a cost of only about $25 per year. The kiosk can be designed so that information can easily be added or removed. The design needs to be determined (for example with or without a roof) and then what materials might be used. After that, the design can be sent to someone for construction. There were a couple of follow-up comments. Rebecca expressed some concern about hikers using QR codes along the trail as they will be stopping in the middle of the trail to do so. And Alexandra talked about the trail guide and what should be included in it.

 Sandy invited committee members to a meeting with Matt Tarr, UNH Extension Service, next Thursday, April 13, at 10:00 at the Town Hall to discuss interpretive signs. She is hoping that Matt may be able to do revisions for us. The goal is to end up with perhaps 8 signs.

 In conclusion, Sandy noted that we are working with about a 6-month time frame to

create and construct interpretive signs, build a kiosk, and lastly complete a revised trail map. She also noted that scheduled trail work should begin in early May – the trail is already marked. The trail will be left open for public use but once we have the dates, we should get information out to the public.

3. Action on request to cut trees in Kimball Wildlife Forest

Amendment to Minutes for February 9, 2023:

Mr. Richard Esson of Sagamore Road was present at the meeting to present his proposal to cut some trees on his property. Since he purchased his property, growth in the forest has reduced his views. He wishes to do what is right by having the trees professionally cut and doing appropriate clean up. He is aware of other cutting that has been done. Sandy outlined the process to be followed, reading from the minutes of the KWF meeting of June 22, 2017. Scott Dunn reiterated that 1) the trees to be cut should be flagged, 2) Tim Nolan, the Town Forester, would visit the area, then 3) the committee would make its recommendation.

At today’s meeting, Sandy noted an email from Tim Nolan dated April 7, 2023 following his visit to the site. He raised several concerns. He questioned whether or not Mr. Esson has a clear idea of where the boundary line is since some of it has been wiped out and a corner pin is missing. Also there has been some unauthorized cutting in that area and he is “uneasy” about the prospect of permitting more cutting – it is setting a precedent for other neighbors. It was also pointed out that when you choose to live next to a forest, you have to expect growth.

The committee discussed numerous aspects of this request but decided it could not support it. As a result**,** the following was moved by Gail Tebbetts and seconded by Alexandra Breed: **The KWF Committee recommends to the Gilford Board of Selectmen that they deny the request of Mr. Richard Esson based on the recommendation of Tim Nolan, the Town Forester, and incompatibility with the mission of the KWF.**  The motion was approved.

Next meeting: May 18, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Bennett, Secretary