



CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

P.O. Box 57 Durham, CT 06422-0057

Meeting Minutes of December 17, 2015

Attending:

Fred Mastele, Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Eric Hammerling, Ruth Beardsley, Laurie Giannotti, Ginger Tullai

Excused:

David Frassinelli

Call to Order:

The meeting was held at the Eversource Building in Berlin. Meeting called to order at 6:48 pm by Fred.

Review Meeting Minutes:

Meeting minutes of June 18, 2015 were reviewed. Motion by Meg to accept. Ruth seconded. Motion unanimously carried.

State Forest & Park Updates:

Natchaug State Forest – Lost Silver Mine Horse Camp: The solar toilets are working. Unknown if they will be closed when camping closes. Fred reported that one door (on the right as face them from the road) gets stuck due to a warped floor. Two picnic tables were removed when DEEP took down some trees to clear the parking area but the tables have not reappeared.

Pachaug State Forest: The proposed trails were approved by the forester but not properly marked. Celeste Santos has marked them with yellow diamonds and noted mileage of various trails. Diane will email Laurie some information on Pachaug to put on the website.

Salmon River State Forest: Fred has heard nothing from Roxanne Winslow. Laurie may ask Tom Nozzle to do it. He has some GPS mapping apps (Avenza) that allow users to download the DEEP map onto their phone and use the app to map it.

Cockaponsett: Laurie reported that GPS mapping has been done.

Larkin: GPS mapping was done. But the email link lead to “Pathways in CT” booklet instead of Larkin. A resurfacing project near Curt Smith Hill Road is being bonded. Also the wooden bridge near Rt. 188 needs to be fixed, and the parking on South Street could be expanded if the gate and boulders were moved back; perhaps large enough for a trailer turn around. Need for more trailer parking was discussed.

Other Trail Reports: None.

Legislative Discussion: The state budget is the big topic in Hartford. Eric reported that \$7 million in bonding for the Connecticut Recreational Trails Program has been authorized but the Bonding Commission has to meet to approve it. Connecticut opted out of the federal RTP because the requirements were too onerous. We need to send a letter to Gov. Malloy to request action. Eric will send the information to Fred who will forward it to the EAC and CHC.

Park Supervisors are subject to “bumping,” by which more senior DEEP Supervisors get to choose which parks they will cover, and “bump” less senior supervisors who in turn “bump” even less senior supervisors. This is permitted by their union contract, but it presents a problem of continuity for the community and groups who deal with them. The contract will come up again in about 2 years and we will consider taking a position then.

Greenway tax credit – the CFPA wants the legislature to approve a tax credit for landowners who allow trails on their land. This would not just be a write off for a donation but an actual credit. Eric will keep us apprised.

Budget cuts to DEEP: The State still needs to cut \$93 million from the budget and all are worried that more will come from the DEEP budget.

Trail Surface Study: All feel it has been sent to every municipality, regional council of governments, and/or horse group we think would be interested. Perhaps send reminders to some of these groups annually.

Old Business: Ginger’s letter and summary of volunteer experience is ready to go out. She will notify us when she sends it. Ruth will call Deena Berlyn in Martin Looney’s office to urge him to nominate Ginger. Motion to approve the letter for nomination made by Meg and seconded by Ruth. Motion passed unanimously.

CT Recreational Trails Advisory Committee has been disbanded. The Greenways Council would be our contact if anything comes up with SCORP, which is a multi-year plan. All user groups are represented, including horses. Jan Collins is the horse representative. They meet at least quarterly and meetings are open to the public.

Tabled from previous meeting: Pathways in Connecticut link on DOT website – discussion of failure to mention horseback riding permitted anywhere on Air Line Trail and state parks and forests.

New Business:

Lori Lindquist is retiring as of January 1, 2016. She has been doing a lot of work on the Air Line Trail.

The Volunteer Horse Patrol may help with monitoring Shenipsit or Pachaug after motorized events to assess damage caused by the event.

CHC and CTRA issue discussed. A former VHP coordinator at Bluff Point criticized CTRA on Facebook after he was misinformed about a CTRA ride leaving a mess. Discussion of misinformation and social media.

CHC elections in December. Planning to change meetings to quarterly in March, June, September and December.

EAC 2016 meetings set: March 17, June 16, September 15 and December 15. Diane will reserve the room at the Eversource Building.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the EAC will be Thursday, March 17th at the Eversource meeting room located at 3333 Berlin Tpke., Newington, CT at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Diane at 8:05 pm. Seconded by Meg. Unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Beardsley
Acting Secretary, EAC