

Minutes of the Shutesbury Recreation Committee Meeting  
June 5, 2019  
7 pm

Present: Christine Robinson, Christine Marglin, Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien, BZ Reilly  
Absent: Rita Farrell  
Guests: Huckle May, Gary Donnelly

Approval of minutes from April 26, 2019 meeting

Christine: we want to get the big picture about trails, and talk about ideas.  
Elizabeth: Huckle and Gary bring different ideas and areas of expertise.

Gary: our initial plan of identifying and documenting different trails at varying levels of difficulty and lengths, and posting them on the website is good, but we didn't go very far with that.

Gary is open to doing more mapping if it's of value. He mapped the trail off Sand Hill Road according to the template provided, and took pictures, with linked to pictures embedded in the map.

Huckle: Start with easy and straightforwardly accessible trails, not those crossing private land. We need to get enough trail information on the website and generate enough interest that people know the maps are there and access them, coming back for more.

Huckle was going to lead a trail walk that was cancelled due to weather beginning on Randall Road near Town Beach. There's a convenient parking lot there and the trail can be done as a long loop. Huckle's dream is to include dirt roads, such as Laurel Road, that are on private land and to make a boardwalk bridge over the Beaver dam. We would have to go through conservation people to gain permission for that. There's a no trespassing sign there currently. Huckle created a map of this walk which we can put up on the website. There are hiking apps that can be linked to, providing more information and images of trails.

Huckle uses Back Country Navigator but that is an Android-only app. There are many others in existence. Good are those that allow hikers to download the map in advance of walking a trail, since it might not be possible to connect while walking.

Information about apps can be offered potentially before a walk once cell service is available in town.

Huckle: Temenos also has beautiful trails. Technically it might be In Wendell, or partially in Wendell. Would Temenos be okay with the town publicizing a walk on their property?

Elizabeth: we have several populations. People who know a lot about trails, like Gary and Huckle. Then other people who would like to know more, who are very interested. Maybe we could offer a workshop to teach people more about trails and hiking in Shutesbury.

Huckle suggests scheduling a hike and offering interested people more information if they're able to come early. Christine R suggests Celebrate Shutesbury in September as an opportunity to have a booth about trails.

Other outdoor ideas generated:

- Animal tracking in winter
- Providing information about protection against ticks
- Mushroom hunting
- Snow shoeing
- Tree and plant identification walks
- A family/children's hike
- Birding and bird call walks
- Geocaching/questing
- Owl walks

We have resources to draw on, such as a woman in the area who could lead mushroom hunting walks.

To get people interested, we could set up a geocache of our own in town.

Huckle will lead his hike. It is roughly three miles and will begin at Randall Road, Sunday, July 7 at 10am.

A notice going out in Roadtown News and Nextdoor Shutesbury and the town newsletter can invite people to visit our booth at Celebrate Shutesbury (possibly - Christine R and Rita will discuss this) and definitely invite people to the July walk led by Huckle. Something will be written up and submitted to Huckle for comment before publishing. Huckle suggests a Google group or something of that sort to communicate with each other.

Talk with Jeanie about her fee to lead a walk for tree identification and birding. The owl population may be unusually large this year because of the large amount of mice last winter.

Brushy mountain has a lot of trails and might be a good area for mapping and exploration. There are short trail systems in our vicinity such as those of the Trustees of Reservations. Another interesting walk is off the Robert Frost Trail in Leverett to a area called Pig Pen Ledge with rocks and caves, accessed from the intersection of Routes 63 and 47 heading toward the Coop.

BZ will connect with Mary Anne about snow shoeing.

State park rangers at Lake Wyola: would they lead a walk? Be at resource in any way? Snow mobile folks are based at the AC and can be contacted there. They have good maps of area trails.

Another walk might be scheduled for August. Possibly Sunday the 25th, a 10 am hike, trail TBD.

Meeting adjourned 8:03 pm.