

Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force
Minutes of Tuesday, October 1, 2019 meeting

NOT VOTED
yet.

DRAFT

Present: Bill Cooke (Selectboard), Peter Franck (Citizen at large), Brandee Nelson (Planning Board), Ilana Siegal (Parks Commission), and Christine Ward (Citizen at large).

Absent: Dale Abrams (Lake Mansfield Alliance), Jeff Cohen (Conservation Commission)

Staff Present: Chris Rembold and Shep Evans

Ms. Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

1. Administrative Business

Ward moved to approve the minutes of September 10, 2019, Cooke seconded. Ward made a motion to amend the draft minutes by adding "She believes the resulting decrease in broken pavement would also have a positive benefit to the water quality of the lake" into her statement in the fourth paragraph on page two of the draft minutes. All were in favor of the minutes as amended.

2. Discussion to clarify the role of the Task Force

There was discussion about the way the Task Force recommendation to close the lake road was presented to the Selectboard.

Ward said she is concerned about the role of the Task Force and the role of staff who attend the Task Force meetings. She said it is important that staff and the Task Force be on the same page and speaking as a unified voice. She said she felt the staff's Executive Summary to the Selectboard [for its September 23 meeting] was sent to the Selectboard but the Task Force recommendation to the Selectboard was not.

Rembold indicated that staff tries to be as clear and honest as possible. He said that the Selectboard did in fact receive both recommendations, and he apologized that he did not clearly communicate the two different recommendations equally.

The Task Force members disturbed that the staff recommendation included comments about emergency services and indicated the Task Force was concerned only with cost, and not with environmental concerns or health of the lake. Members felt the Task Force work over so many years trying to protect and improve the lake health was not represented by staff and made it appear as if the Task Force is not doing its job.

It was agreed that communication and transparency is important to the Task Force mission and that success in future work depends on a clear message.

3. Discussion of the Selectboard decision on short term paving

Evan said that the Conservation Commission wanted him to communicate that the Commission feels strongly that it has jurisdiction over any road work in the road area, and that the work is not exempted from the Town's own wetland bylaw. He said the local bylaw is stricter than the state regulations.

Nelson said she thought that was going too far and could set a new precedent.

Evans said Commission does not prohibit work but it must review and condition work prior to the work happening, in order to protect a resource area.

Ward moved that in light of the above information the Selectboard reconsider the Task Force recommendation regarding closing the road. Franck seconded. All were in favor.

Siegal said there is a lot of misinformation about what the Task Force has done. Some people think they won't be able to get to the Lake or beach anymore. The Selectboard decision was vague and caused confusion and alarm. She suggested the Task Force better communicate to the public. She suggested a letter to the editor. It was agreed that Nelson, Ward, and Siegal would work on such a letter.

Members thought a presentation to the Selectboard should be done as well. Cooke will ask the Selectboard.

4. Lake Mansfield Road CPA:

The Task Force voted to support a CPA application for road design and engineering funds to implement the long term design. Franck asked that KZLA's role on the engineering team be clarified because their design perspective is important to have.

5. Citizen's Speak Time

There was a comment that communicating the Task Force recommendations to the public is important.

There was a comment that the Town needs to be realistic about spending money given the other infrastructure costs throughout the town.

There as a comment that recent weed growth is heavy and the Task Force should address this. Ward said the best way to address it to reduce runoff and sedimentation. She said also the weevils are still active. Nelson suggested this be on the next meeting agenda.

Town Manager Mark Pruhenski reiterated that the staff is committed to the Task Force and Selectboard recommendation for the ultimate closure of the road. He said we may have had a difference of opinion in how to get to that point, but staff is committed to support the Task Force's work.

Franck said he may have to become an alternate to the Task Force since he may not be able to attend upcoming meetings.

6. The next meeting will be Tuesday November 12 at 8:30 AM. Nelson will chair again.

7. The meeting adjourned at 9:48 AM

Minutes prepared by:

Christopher Rembold