

DRAFT
Minutes
Buffalo Mountain Town Forest Steering Committee
Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Members Present: Brendan Buckley, Eric Remick, Renaud Demers, Leif Goldberg, James Kelley, Andy Gilbert, Joe Nudell, Margery Prevot, Julie Sullivan, Rachel Kane, Paul Cillo, Lucien Avery, Dylan LaFlam, Marie LaPré Grabon

Members Not Present: Sue Rivard, Tyler Buswell

Advisory Members Present: Hannah Redmon

Brendan Called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Agenda Item #1: Eric moved that the minutes from the August 11 meeting be approved. Andy seconded the move. The move was passed and the minutes were approved.

Agenda Item #2: Marie added to the agenda. She requested assistance with posting the minutes and agendas to the town website. Lucien volunteered to take on this responsibility. Marie will not be at the next meeting so Paul volunteered to take the minutes at the September 8th meeting and to post them to the steering committee's Google page. Marie will let Lucien know when the August 25th meetings are been posted to the Google page.

Agenda Item #3: There were no public comments.

Agenda Item #4: This item was moved to later in the meeting when Dylan would be in attendance. (See below)

Item #5: Hannah proposed that the steering committee schedule public walks on the Town Forest, and that we schedule them with volunteers from the committee and eventually with special guests. She stressed the need to have public conversations about the proposed activities for the town forest and be ready to reply to specific questions that community members might have. Lucien and Joe volunteered to lead a public walk on either September 26 or 27. It was suggested that 2 or 3 walks be planned by the committee, whatever we can get on the schedule. James stated he had 2 or 3 weekends available. Brendan and Julie will lead a walk on either October 3rd or 10th. Leif proposed a bicycle ride up Buffalo Mountain on September 12th and a potential walk. Renaud reminded us that bear hunting season begins on September 1st, and ends when deer hunting season ends, and that partridge hunting season begins on September 31. These community events will be publicized on Front Porch Forum by the leaders involved in each one and the publicity will include a description the walk or bicycle ride. Hannah asked the committee what the goals are for the mountain walks. The reply was to "basically get ourselves out there".

Item #6: The committee began discussing the Farmer's Market community outreach event that is planned for Friday, August 26th in the pavilion at Atkins Field. This is an opportunity to discuss with community members the results of the survey. Hannah asked who would be attending. She volunteered to bring folding tables, markers, paper to write on, an easel, and maps of Buffalo Mountain. Brendan will provide a sandwich board and Lief will bring an easel. Julie brought up the idea of a raffle and stated she will donate micro-spikes as a door prize. Rachel will donate a Hydrangea Bush. Julie will create the tickets and Marie will make a poster advertising the donated items. The committee decided snacks were not necessary. The event will be posted on Front Porch Forum by Brendan, and he will also provide a sandwich board at the entrance to the market with info about our presence. He will also bring a large map of the conserved area on the mountain.

Hannah initiated a discussion of the goals of the outreach event. Committee members volunteered a number of goals i.e. to be able to answer questions from the public, to provide the survey results, to provide maps of Buffalo Mountain, to remind the community that our committee meetings are open to the public, to basically let the public know what the committee is doing. Hannah and Joe will work on compiling handouts showing the results of the community survey.

Item #4. Dylan gave the committee an explanation costs related to Cricket Hill Trails, in Hyde Park. This parcel of land consists of 200 acres and (20?) kilometers of ski trails (double track) and 10 kilometers of single track for hiking. The trails are used by middle and high school cross country running and ski teams. They are also used by the Hyde Park Elementary School and are open to the public. The trails are maintained by Brewster River Mountain Club in warm weather. The costs to maintain the trails runs from \$8,000 - \$15,000 for the whole trail system. The trails are maintained three times a year. Eric stated that regarding Hardwick Trails, most maintenance goes to the ski trails, and to expect the Buffalo Mountain hiking and biking trails will need annual maintenance. Lucien stated his brother offered an analysis that it costs \$1,000 per year per mile for professional maintenance. Lucien will follow up on this and ask his brother for more info. Margie suggesting contacting Kingdom Trails about how volunteers and staff contribute to trail maintenance. Brendan will ask Alex who is employed there as staff.

Item #7: Brendan and Hannah stressed that the committee needs get the first draft of the management plan organized. Brendan asked that all committee members sign up to review a section so that a second draft can be put in place, and he asked that everyone be involved and that a preliminary draft can be sent to the select board in three weeks, and then to appropriate committees. It was suggested that the stewardship committee delegate to VAST and VASA committees and to use existing town committees that will interact with the Select Board. The stewardship committee, whose members will be selected by the Select Board, will decide how to manage the Town Forest. Dylan offered that re: the issue of management vs maintenance the Select Board will decide. Andy will talk to the Hardwick Trails Committee about about how much they would be able to help with the Town Forest trails, but the Hardwick Trails would not want to manage. The decision will be put in writing. Lucien suggested that the Select Board might want a

town land committee and that the 78 acres the town now owns would be managed under a land management plan. There was much discussion re: an interim management plan, when the Stewardship Committee would see the plan...and whether this could be an interim plan, a six month interim plan that is revisited, or a ten year plan open to changes, a six month full plan, a one year plan to be reviewed at the end of one year, or to set a deadline for the full management plan. The committee agreed that this issue did not need to be decided on at this meeting.

All committee members volunteered to review and revise draft sections of the management plan to date so the the committee will have a second draft prepared for the Select Board. (See below)

Regarding Proposed Activities Schedule/Plan: what are the next steps, talk with Jon, safety rules, access etc., concerns re: notes of not putting trails on old logging roads.

Management Plan Reviewing

Roles:

- **Project Background**
 - Introduction (Brendan, Dylan) **Eric**
 - Public Input (Joe) **Lucian, Dylan**
 - History (Andy) **Brendan, Joe**
 - **Addition of existing Buffalo Mountain Town Forest background–Joe review–Paul, Dylan**
 - **Also include a section about how to apply this plan to the existing BMTF parcel**
 - Local and regional significance (Andy) **Brendan**
 - Summary of Conservation Easement (Lucian) **Dylan, Margie**
- **Town objectives (Brendan) Dylan**
 - Administration of Buffalo Mountain Forest
- **Infrastructure**
 - General Topographic Information (Dylan) **Joe, Andy**
 - Scenic Values (Joe) **Julie, Brendan, Andy**
 - Roads (Sue) **Marie, Andy**
 - Boundary Lines (Dylan) **Lucian, Andy**
- **Geology and Soils**
 - Bedrock Geology (Margie) **Joe, James**
 - Soils (Margie–delay, comes from FMP–ask Hannah for map)
- **Forest Management (Emily Sayers/ALL)**
- **Wildlife (Tyler) James**
- **Rare Species and Exemplary Natural Communities (Julie) Rachel**
- **Water Resources (Margie/Eric) Upcoming Sept 1–Leif**
 - Rivers and streams
 - Wetlands
 - Vernal Pools
- **Recreation and Education (ALL) Leif**

- **Proposed Governance Structure (Andy/Eric/Sue) Joe, Paul**
- **Proposed Activities Schedule**
 - **Address concerns and pitfalls like trails on forest roads**

Item #8: Due to limited time this item re: the “Purpose Statement” was not discussed.

Brendan moved to adjourned the meeting, Dylan seconded the move, all agreed and the meeting ended at 7:59 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for **6:00 p.m. on September 8th** at the Parker Ladd Room, Jeudevine Memorial Library.

Respectfully submitted by Marie LaPré Grabon