

Air Line Trail Steering Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2022
Portland Library, Mary Flood Room

Present: Steve Byrne, Chantal Foster, Lou Pear, Rick Sharr;

Absent: Tom Ladny, Rosario Rizzo, Carol Winiski; Alternates Carol Bozena, Bill Flood

Public: Joe Barone, Sebby Barone, Matt Mucinkas, Mathew Smith and Mike Tierney from Portland Boy Scout Troop 2; Linda Dutcher

1. **Chairman Call Meeting to Order** – Lou Pear called the regular meeting to order at 6:31 pm.
2. **Roll Call/Seating of Alternates** – No alternates seated.
3. **Agenda Accepted** – There was a motion by Steve Byrne seconded by Rick Sharr to accept the agenda. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
4. **Accept Meeting Minutes** – There was a motion by Steve Byrne, seconded by Rick Sharr to accept the Meeting Minutes from the April 27, 2022 Regular Meeting. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
5. **Public Comment** – Mike Tierney explained the Scouts were attending the meeting to meet a requirement for earning their Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge.
6. **Old Business** – None.
7. **New Business**
 - a. **Success of Celebrate Trails Day** – Linda Dutcher said she attended the event which was very nice and enjoyed by over 20 attendees.
 - b. **Trails Clean Up for June 4th** – It was decided there is no need to do a separate clean up day for the upcoming CFPA event, the trail is in excellent shape and we will monitor as we get closer. However, we need to keep the trestle on our radar – the south side “steps” need to be cleaned up. The north side is in good shape.
 - c. **Pollinator Garden Update** – Amy Janke has said her group, the River Valley Garden Club, is ready to have Bob Sequenzia scrape a few inches of existing “soil” off the location where they plan to plant. Chantal will be coordinating with Bob and Amy. Amy also plans to have soil delivered to the site, but not to plant until the fall (due to lack of water). In the interim, they would like to get some free woodchips to place on top, but may cover the soil with landscape fabric or a tarp to prevent weed seeds from entering the soil. The group will be responsible for monitoring any material placed there to ensure it doesn’t get loose and fly around. Only biodegradable materials will be left on site once planting is complete.
 - d. **MOU Update** – Lou explained that Ryan has been very supportive of reaching an agreement with Butler, Ryan has reached out to Butler, they have responded by indicating they have a safer alternative for trail location, but we have yet to hear what that is, so still in a holding pattern.
 - e. **CT Trails Day – June 4th @ 10 am/rain date June 5th @ 11** – John LeShane will be leading this hike which is a collaboration between the Middlesex Land Trust and the ALTC. The hike will start at the Palmer Preserve barn on Middle Haddam Road. Lou will set up a table and have sign in sheets (Chantal to provide). The hike will be advertised in the next two *Rivereast* publications in the Portland section.
 - f. **Bill Flood’s Replacement** – Bill hasn’t responded to requests for his resignation so Riz will inquire what to do so we can get another person appointed to the Commission.
 - g. **BOS Liaison – Portland Improvement Team** – Mike Pelton is our BOS Liaison and he arranged for a walkabout with consultant Malcolm Beeler from Sampson & Weston in which both Lou and Rick Sharr from our committee along with several other representatives from

other interested parties (Complete Streets, townsfolk, etc.) to talk about big picture issues -- looking to improve connectivity for walkers/bikers, improve traffic flow, create town center and more. Lou and Rick will continue to update us as meetings and discussions take place.

- h. Keegan Parking Lot – New Trees** – Not entirely sure what was intended here, but it appears some of the trees initially planted when the parking area was created have died. They should be replaced. Also discussion about being a good neighbor and reaching out to the abutters of the parking area to see if they would like more of a visual buffer installed.
 - i. Other New Business** – Our next meeting will be held at the Riverfront Park Pavilion which Riz has reserved for our meeting as follows: **June 29th, August 31st and September 28th.**
PLEASE NOTE for the July meeting, we will be back in the Library as the Pavilion is booked for this date. Reminders will be sent.
8. **General Discussion/Communications/Correspondence** – Lou distributed some more time sheets that he would like completed for the tracking project by the end of June.
 9. **Adjournment Meeting** – There was a motion by Rick Sharr, seconded by Steve Byrne to adjourn the regular meeting. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Our next meeting is a Regular Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, **June 29, 2022 at 6:30 pm, Riverfront Park Pavilion.**

Respectfully submitted,
Chantal Foster
Recording Secretary

