**Air Line Trail Steering Committee**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**March 27, 2024**

**Portland Library – Van Beynum Room**

Present: Steve Byrne, Chantal Foster, Tom Ladny, Lou Pear, Rosario Rizzo, Carol Winiski; Alternate Jay Asikainen; Public: Bob Sequenzia

Absent: Rick Sharr and Alternate Carol Bozena

1. **Chairman Call Meeting to Order** – Lou Pear called the Regular meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
2. **Seating of Alternates** – Jay Asikainen was seated for Rick Sharr.
3. **Agenda Accepted –** There was a motion by Riz Rizzo seconded by Tom Ladny to accept the agenda. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
4. **Accept Meeting Minutes** – There was a motion by Tom Ladny seconded by Riz Rizzo to approve the meeting minutes from December 6, 2023. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
5. **Public Comment** – None.
6. **Old Business –** None.
7. **New Business** 
   1. **Eversource Recommendation to Trail Proposal** – Lou, Ryan C, Ryan O, Geoff Jacobsen and several Eversource representatives reviewed westbound trail options. No clear consensus on how to proceed. Other options were discussed but it was suggested we have a map with the various options identified to make it easier for everyone involved to understand where we are and what options exist. Lou will create this map (a rough depiction of the “options” and he will also pursue getting a professional opinion on the feasibility of using the old railbed on the Jarvis property given the water issues that exist.
   2. **CT Hike Day** – The date, time and place have been set – June 1st @ 10 am, Palmer Preserve in Portland at the barn; rain date Sunday June 2nd @ 11 am. John LeShane will lead. Consider changing up the route.
   3. **Trail Work Day** – In preparation for Trails Day, we will schedule a work day. Consider using the offered assistance of Gilbane again? Riz/Lou will communicate a proposed work date, stay tuned. This should be coordinated so as not to conflict with any work dates for the Brownstone Quorum which they are in the process of scheduling as well. Carol can keep Lou/Riz apprised of that.
   4. **Portland Senior Center Hike Days** – Carol B. has been instrumental in establishing a program which includes the Portland Senior Center, Bartlett Hill (senior living) and the ALT to establish a program to encourage seniors to walk on the ALT – two dates scheduled so far: 4/9 and 5/14 (Tuesdays), they will be advertised in the Senior Center calendar. The Senior Center will provide transportation (if desired) to Depot Hill, the walk on 5/14 will be led by Beau Doherty (wildlife enthusiast/photographer). Looking for other leaders depending on the popularity of the program.
   5. **Invite COG Reps to our meetings –** It has been noted there is funding available for design and construction for projects such as ours, but we need a plan.
   6. **Jarvis Railbed Offer –**This was addressed in a. above. It would be helpful to get a professional opinion as to whether the railbed is a viable option or if the existing water flowing through the area would make it too expensive to use. Suggested getting opinions of Kevin Grindle and/or Jim Sipperly.
   7. **Trail Hike May 14th –** Addressed in d. above.
   8. **Town Matching Account is up to $100,000** – These funds could potentially be utilized for a matching portion of any grant monies we may receive.
   9. **Items to Address with Ryan** – These were all covered in a. above.
   10. **The 111 Mile Trail Loop Meetings** – Lou gave us some background on what this is about. For more information, refer to this link from the Jonah Center website: <https://thejonahcenter.org/airline-trail-to-farmington-canal-connector/>
   11. **Other New Business** – None.
8. **General Discussion/Communications/Correspondence –** As we have adopted a quarterly meeting schedule, consider when we could hold our annual picnic. Last year it was held in July – we have meetings scheduled for June and September in 2024. Stay tuned!
9. **Adjournment Meeting** – There was a motion by Riz Rizzo, seconded by Carol Winiski to adjourn the regular meeting. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Meeting adjourned 7:35 pm.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **June 26, 2024 at 6:30 pm, at the Portland Library.**

Respectfully submitted,

Chantal Foster

Recording Secretary

