

Tunbridge Town Forest Committee – January 19, 2018 Town Office - draft

David Kimball, Brenda Field, Gary Mullen, Larry Mengedoght, Dan 'rudi' Ruddell, guest David Paganelli

Meeting to order at 7:14 pm

County Forester David Paganelli kindly attended to give updates on status of Town Forest management, starting with a review of the 2000-2001 harvest. David then gave a review of the summer 2017 harvest and treatment conducted on the Town Garage Lot by Calvin Johnson, primarily removing low value pine in Stand 3 and improving access to the sand pit if that is needed in the future.

David P. gave further review of the remainder of planned management activities: low value markets in winter 2016-2017 delayed planned harvests and management on the remainder of the Town Garage Lot and the Drew Lot, and the work was rescheduled and contracted for winter 2017-2018. In late 2017 Calvin communicated that he is unable to do the work this winter. He was selected for the work in large part due to what was viewed as an appropriately scaled mix of equipment for these jobs (which are somewhat limited in size and have both some steep slopes and wet areas), particularly the use of a forwarder. We are unaware of anyone else in the area who currently has a forwarder and a similar mix of other appropriately scaled equipment. It does not appear likely that a replacement can be found and engaged to conduct work this winter (2017-2018).

Due to these changes, David P. discussed possible other avenues for conducting harvest and treatment activities on the remainder of the Town Garage Lot and the Drew Lot. He suggested use of a cable skidder and contracting with someone who is able to make best use of moderate value hemlock timber (possibly through local timber frame utilization) and firewood components that would comprise a significant portion of the work. In addition, low value pine may be removed from the primary contract (or included with it on a different payment basis). Due to the poor market for utilization of this wood (a regional economic structural issue of significant concern) there may be value in looking at just dropping or girdling these trees for nutrient recycling, release of more desirable trees, and contributions to wildlife habitat enhancement. Larry had some particular suggestions regarding small patch cuts for wildlife habitat, and David P. noted these for further review.

With appreciation of David P.'s thoughts and explanation, the Town Forest Committee endorsed and encouraged David P.'s plans to contact a few other loggers he has in mind that may fit the needs identified and be able to conduct the work in winter 2018-2019.

There was brief discussion of possibilities for moving the Town Garage Lot access road further away from the sand pit and regrading to increase accessibility, leveraging opportunities created by the summer 2017 treatment. In addition, there was enthusiastic discussion of the successful and popular use of the Town Garage Lot by Tunbridge and Chelsea schools this year, with strong interest and input regarding continued use along these lines.

David K. motioned to adjourn, Brenda seconded, all approved; meeting adjourned 7:56 pm.

Minutes taken by Gary Mullen, transcribed and augmented d. ruddell.