

Town Commons Committee minutes for Tuesday, November 18, 2025

- Call to Order: 5:00pm
- In Attendance: Jeremy Litchfield (chair), Mark Fochasato (vice-chair), Mike Ferry, Caleb Chang (BHS), Mike Ferry, Mike Halmo, Nat Shed (town council), Dennis Wilson (town liaison), Kim Anderson (guest, town council)
- Goals for today's meeting are recommendations for the new merged committee with the Rec Commission, and to recommend 2 members for the transition.
- Recommendations discussion covered various points that were summarized in the motion below, with additional discussion including:
 - Having representatives from the current Town Commons committee attend Parks & Recreation meetings until our trail map/trail adoption/signage projects are completed.
 - Friends of the Commons may need more structure going forward.
 - The new committee mission statement and charge needs to reflect both rec commission programming and a focus on parks management (Town Commons and other property), and would be good if stewardship were written in specifically to help guide the appointments committee when considering candidates for the new dual role of the committee.
 - Discussion of management plans across different pieces of property in town.
 - There should be a Town Council liaison to the new committee.
 - Expanding special events and educational events that we've begun holding at the Town Commons.
 - Discussion of the Rec Commission vs Conservation Commission and how some of our priorities may more appropriately be split between the two.
 - Having a future trail named after Priscilla Davis for all of the work she has done over the decades on the Town Commons committee.
 - The current timeline is for the Town Council to finish rewriting charters and having it presented in front of the full council at the first meeting in December (ideally).
- **Blaine motioned that that our recommendation to the Town Council for our priorities to be maintained going forward include the following points, seconded and passed unanimously:**
 1. The new committee include 2 student representatives as voting members (one high school rep, one college rep)
 2. Complete our major projects which are all tied together:
 - New Trail Map
 - Adoption of New Trails
 - New Signage
 3. Continue/expand the Friends of the Commons as either a formal or ad hoc sub-committee or task force
 4. Continue the following events and activities (roughly quarterly):
 - Semi-Annual Cleanup Days
 - Chestnut Planting and Management
 - Pitch Pine Management
 5. Add regular Town Commons content to the Parks & Recreation newsletter

6. Complete a new Management Plan and Botanical Survey

- There was a discussion on who we should recommend to fill the 2 new seats in the merged committee. We have until the end of the year to put forth a formal recommendation.
 - **Mike motioned that Blaine and Mark be designees to the new committee (reserving the right to make changes at the December meeting to give members who were unable to be present an opportunity to speak up)**, passed with 4 votes in favor and 2 abstained.
- Next Meeting: December 16, 2025 at 5:00pm
- Meeting Adjourned: 6:06pm