

OPEN SPACE MEETING – October 13 2025

Members Present: Messrs. Sabatini, Dlugos, Morytko, Duch

Members Absent: Messrs. Esposito, Bogardus, Mayor Rubenstein

Also present: Secretary Caitlin Phillips, Forester Heather Gracie

Mr. Morytko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OS FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT:

Reserve for Open Space: \$\$426,129.69. Mr. Morytko confirmed with Mr. Sabatini that the debt has been cleared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 11, 2025 Minutes. Mr. Dlugos motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Duch. All were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Review Forest Stewardship Plan (Forest Stewardship Plan) / Timber Sale

Mr. Dlugos said it will likely be March when the prescribed burn occurs. He talked about educating people, and noted they should start talking about barberry and the value of prescribed burns. The Committee discussed how and when to notify people. Mr. Sabatini said they should wait until the new year, but can let Forest Lakes know early because they can share the information in their newsletter. Mr. Duch said they can use the fire house sign. Ms. Gracie said they can put signs at the location of the burning so people visiting the area will know that it will be closed for a few days. Mr. Sabatini said if the prescribed burn takes place in April, they may have sports' group activity. Mr. Morytko said they can use Nixle, the town website, the lake communities, and sports groups for notification. They should include education on why this is occurring. Mr. Sabatini said the information on invasives can go out now through the Environmental Commission. Mr. Duch said they need volunteers in the EC. Mr. Dlugos said George Efinger recommended using other towns' strategies as an example. Ms. Gracie can provide contact information for Mercer Meadow and the Audubon for more information.

Mr. Morytko noted they're considering redoing the Forest Stewardship plan. Ms. Gracie said they need to give the information to Ron Farr. The plan isn't approved because it needs individual plans for each parcel. She can review the activity on each parcel, and add to the plans for each year. They can inventory each parcel, and they would charge per plan, but they know the parcels pretty well at this point. They need someone in town to be the keeper of the documents. Mr. Dlugos said the EC wants professional direction. Ms. Gracie said they will also want to focus on safety. Beech trees are having issues, so they need to be mindful. Mr. Sabatini noted the difference between the forest stewardship plan and the community forestry plan. Mr. Dlugos said he put together an invasives plan. Ms. Gracie will review it.

MEMBER REPORTS

Mr. Dlugos said the Environmental Commission will have a hike next Sunday at Tripod Rock. The Trail Keepers have 11 people signed up. The trail mapping is going well. Ms. Phillips noted for the Planning Board, they have a use variance application coming up for a residential property, for an ATV trail. Mr. Sabatini said they've had problems with electric bikes. He noted he is working on the budget for the coming year.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

No public was present.

ADJOURN – Motion by Mr. Dlugos, second by Mr. Sabatini, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55pm. All members in favor. Motioned carried.