

STAMFORD ATV COMMITTEE MEETING 9/27/21

MINUTES

UNAPPROVED

Present: Brandon Field, Marta Miller, Natalie Yorke, Rob Bouchard, Carol Fachini, Jessica Tatro

Absent: Dave Tatro

Visitors: Mitch Mullet, Pam Tworig, Bruce Richardson, Deb Burchard, Carolyn Brooks

Call to order.

Jessica Tatro received questions regarding visitors speaking at meetings. Natalie states that visitors should be allowed to speak similarly to select board meetings. All agreed.

Deb Burchard asked if the Planning Committee should be included in the ATV Committee. Natalie says that since the ATV Committee has no authority to make decisions, it shouldn't be necessary but she is welcome at meetings.

It was decided to use a loose version of Robert's Rules.

Carol will put the ATV Committee on the Select Board Agenda for updates.

Deb Burchard states that bylaws, zoning and permitting are all determined through the Planning Commission. There was a brief discussion about the town plan. All members agreed to review the town plan.

Jessica Tatro will take care of posting agendas for meetings.

The committee agreed meetings will be held Thursdays opposite the Select Board from 6 to 7:30pm and set the next meeting for October 14.

Marta asked ATV club representatives what they are thinking. Jessica states they were not involved in the Jack Pines Pirates and Bennington Trail Cruisers previously approaching the select board. She states the new club, Stamford Ridge Riders are taking over the Bennington atv club as it's disbanding. Conversation was had regarding the Bennington club, VASA trail decals, etc. Further discussion ensued about National Forest Service plans, proposed club signage, VASA involvement, the Sucker Pond Trail and trail maintenance. Natalie asked proposed time frames for work. Jessica stated they would like to start ASAP cleaning up. Hunting season dates and closing dates of surrounding area trails were discussed and Natalie states looks like this year would not likely work as there are many questions that need to be answered before the group can make a recommendation to the select board.

Marta discussed the challenges to enforcement. We would like to hear from various law enforcement and they don't have time or manpower at this point to address us right now. We heard from DFW Game Wardens at 8/19 meeting. Martina Barnes from National Forest will be coming to SB meeting; regardless there is no direct enforcement structure. If trails are VASA affiliated, they are listed in national mapping and provide an exponential increase in ATV traffic further challenging enforcement. Carol states the kids are going to party anyway.

Members of the committee and visitors posed many questions to club representative committee members regarding potential club membership numbers, self-policing and VASA. Jessica stated the club wants to start with regulating only the trails that were open a few months ago. Rob discussed ditching, culverts and VASA grant money. Bruce countered that class 4 road ditches are maintained by the town so VASA is not needed.

Pam asked about expected revenues generated through club memberships and if the work proposed is financially feasible. She further stated that VASA can't sustain revenue and expenses without the local clubs building members.

Pam states that website searches of VASA ATV clubs throughout the state reveal repeated pleas to club members to be respectful, stop littering, destroying property, speeding, going off trail, etc. Seems that their pleas are going unheeded.

Many ideas were discussed and Marta again mentioned a Stamford resident/property owner sticker. Brandon said he would try to look into that. The question of VASA vs. no VASA and town trails being open is a legal question.

It was unclear whether the Sucker Pond Trail is open or not. It is thought the SB only has jurisdiction over town roads. Green Mountain National Forest and National Forest require VASA TAD to ride.

Next steps: Continue fact finding to various questions and find out what can and can't be done with and without VASA.