

# Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission

## Public Meeting on Recreational Trail Use

### Meeting Minutes

Wednesday September 6, 2017

**Location:** West Auburn Congregational Church

**Time:** Meeting began at 6:00 PM

**Commissioners Present:** Tizz Crowley, Joe Grube, Michael Lachance, Dave Jones

**Commissioners Absent:** Bob Thompson, Bethel Shields, John Bonneau, Steve French

**Others Present:** Lynne Richard Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Watershed Protection Commission, Michael Broadbent Commission Secretary, Sid Hazelton Commission Clerk, Kevin Gagne Commission Clerk and members of the public

Tim Cogle, President of the Lake Auburn Neighborhood Watch Group, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Tim passed around an attendance roster "Attachment A" for signatures. Tim Introduced Sid Hazelton, P.E., Auburn Water and Sewer District Superintendent and Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission Clerk.

Sid welcomed the members of the public and presented the purpose of the meeting. Sid then introduced to the public the members of the Commission Board and Water and Sewer District Trustees that were present at the meeting.

Following the introduction Sid informed the audience that if they did not feel comfortable discussing ideas or concerns at the meeting they had the option of sending their comments to Sid in writing.

Sid then opened the meeting to the public and read a letter that was submitted in writing prior to the meeting.

**Anne Russo, Hotel Rd Auburn:** Anne would like the Commission to consider opening Spring Road for snowmobile access.

**Ben Lounsbury, 505 West Auburn Rd:** X-country skier who has intimate knowledge of the Spring Rd trail system. Ben pointed out that there is a new trail that crosses West Auburn Rd. then Spring Road and onto the lake. Ben asked what the snowmobilers were looking for. Sid

explained that the Commission has been asked to open the gates between the South and Middle Gates.

**Dan Bilodeau, Trail Master of the Perkins Ridge Snow-Travelers** Dan explained to the audience where the approved snowmobile trails are and that the goal of the snowmobiling community would be to groom and open up the entire stretch of Spring Road.

**Evan / Jody Cyr, 435 North Auburn:** Evan is concerned by the idea of the groomer / snowmobiles traveling on the Spring Rd from the Middle gate to the South Gate. Evan also asked why snowmobiles are allowed on the public portion of Spring Rd. This portion of the Road is plowed and sanded. Evan was concerned that the snowmobiles will encroach on this right of way.

Evan later commented that he has experienced multiple occurrences with trespass from snowmobilers and hunters leaving the Spring Road Trail and entering his property. Evan does not feel that posting 10 mph speed limit signs is enough to slow down snow machines if they are allowed to use the Spring Road. Evan does not want to open the southern section of the Spring Road to snowmobiles.

Jody later commented that she is concerned with the lack of enforcement and the track record of bad behavior on the Spring Road.

**Tim Cogle** suggested having a subcommittee / group to develop and work on a parallel trail system. He also asked what the width of the right of way is on Spring Rd.

**John Brocke, 280 West Auburn Road:** John and his wife recently opened up their lands to snowmobiling and other recreational uses. Their land connects West Auburn Road and Spring Road. John would like to urge the Commission to open the Spring Road for the same purposes.

**Bonnie Lounsbury, 505 West Auburn Rd:** Bonnie has concerns about the use of snowmobiles on the south portion of Spring Rd. Bonnie is an avid cross-country skier and enjoys the Spring Rd for what it currently offers and feels that snowmobiles would be an intrusion to the current use.

**Rosy Hayden, 480 West Auburn Road:** Rosy enjoys walking her dogs on Spring Road and does not want to have snowmobiles or motorized vehicles on the road. She enjoys the peace and quiet that the Spring Road offers.

Rosy later commented that there have been several trespass issues onto her family's private property, to the point that they had to post their land which has not stopped the trespassing in this area.

**Neria Douglass, 465 West Auburn Road:** Neria was on the Watershed Board when the road was discontinued. She currently owns property that abuts the Spring Road. Neria does not want snowmobiles or other motorized vehicles on Spring Road.

**John Hayden, 480 West Auburn Road:** John and his wife own the property from West Auburn Road back to Lapham Brook. John's issue is that snowmobilers are going off the trail and encroaching on their personal property to the point that they had to post their land.

**Fred Koch, 681 West Auburn Road:** Fred has extensive experience grooming snowmobile trails in the area of North and West Auburn Roads. Fred explained that he does not currently groom the section of Spring Road from the Middle Gate to the South Gate. They simply put the wheels down on the drag and traverse the road. Fred said that it is also extremely difficult to turn the groomer around when he has to stop at the middle gate. Fred has encountered many people in his travels grooming and has never received negative feedback about his work.

**Kevin Arel, Mt. Auburn Avenue:** Asked that the Spring Road trail system be shared with the snowmobile clubs. Kevin is an avid snowmobiler and is always cautious on multi use trails.

**Rick & Jane Johnson, 340 Ryan's Way:** Rick is an avid walker and enjoys using the Spring Road and the Hotel Loop for recreation. Rick mentioned that in his travels on Spring Road he does not see a lot of snowmobile traffic even on the permitted portions. Jane feels compromise can be had between the different types of recreation if both sides are willing to compromise.

**Kathy Sonagere, 483 West Auburn Road:** Kathy asked how a decision will be made on recreation on the Spring Road? She also asked how will the previous decision made in 1991 to close the Spring Road effect the Commission's decision on this issue.

**Tizz Crowley, 35 University Street:** Tizz is a Watershed Commissioner and wanted to explain how this notion of opening the Spring Road was considered. Tizz feels that having snowmobilers on the frozen lake is a bigger risk than the impacts of opening the Spring Road to snowmobile traffic.

**Mike Lachance, Watershed Commissioner:** Mike represents the City of Lewiston on the Watershed Protection Commission. He feels letting snowmobiles onto Lake Auburn is a separate issue from opening the Spring Road. Mike was really interested in the folks who currently use the road for recreation.

**Kevin Gagne, Commission Clerk:** Kevin is the Lewiston Clerk on the Watershed Protection Commission. Kevin grew up in the North Auburn area and feels that there is room for all parties to work together to develop a community decision on the use of these trails.

**Mary Sylvester, Auburn resident, Water District Trustee:** Mary asked Dan if he would have a mechanism to control activities around Lake Auburn. Dan mentioned several websites for all types of recreation.

Mary later commented that she felt what was being considered was to groom half of the road and allow snowmobiles on one half and foot traffic on the other half.

**Christie Brown, 31 Ryan's Way:** Christie questioned the Commission's goal. It was confirmed that Water Quality and protection of the Lake is goal #1. Allowing acceptable recreation is secondary. Christie pointed out that snowmobiling is not an activity that negatively impacts water quality.

**Charlie Desjardins, Spring Road:** Charlie's family owns a camp on Spring Road. He has always been opposed to snowmobile traffic there. He asked if there were Dusk to Dawn restrictions on Spring Road. He also said that he felt compromise can be had to permit snowmobiles as long as there are proper restrictions.

**Dave Jones, Watershed Commissioner:** Dave thanked the public for their presence and comments. He urged folks to submit comments in writing and to come to the Commission meeting which is planned for September, 13 at AVCOG.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30pm



A true record, Attest:

Michael Broadbent,

Secretary of the LAWPC