



# Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

## Minutes of Committee Meeting January 27, 2014 – 8:30 PM

*Members Present:* Joe Geller (chair), Dave Read, Roy Baessler, and Gregg Demers and Bill Rossitor

*Guests:* Dick Gandt (Selectman), Lisa O'Connell, Pete Hayes and Deb Hayes

1. **Minutes approval:** The minutes of the November 18, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. **Erosion repair: Ipswich River Bridge:** Lisa O'Connell, a structural engineer from the firm LJO Engineering of Essex, MA discussed what she had found on an earlier trip to determine the extent of damage at the southwest abutment of the Ipswich River Bridge. She indicated that the erosion had occurred over years and the work could be done in phases. the initial repair would cost approx. \$9,000 and a permanent repair would cost approx \$30,000. Joe noted that work that costs under \$10,000 does not have to go out to bid.
3. **Kiosk update:** Dave finished installing the kiosk with Eagle Scout candidate Nick Meixsell. This final piece was the installation of a weather and graffiti resistant informational panel that has a map of the Border to Boston Trail, mileages to key destinations on the trail and some local rail road history about trains that used the right of way before the trail. The funding for this first kiosk was privately donated and is similar to one built on the Peabody/Danvers line. The trail groups in Danvers, Topsfield and Wenham have all agreed to use similar kiosks and graphics that will help with branding and continuity along the trail. Essex National Heritage Commission has indicated that they would be willing to fund several more kiosks along the trail through their Partnership Grant Program. Most likely Topsfield will only need one more for a total of two kiosks with panels.
4. **DCR grant award:** Joe attended the Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation Grant Award ceremony that took place in Malden on the Northern Strand Trail to accept the 2013 award for Topsfield. Joe reminded us that we need to keep track of our hours when we are volunteering on the trail.
5. **Main St. Curb Cut:** Gregg has received 3 quotes to do the curb cut at Main St with a range between \$8,000 to \$13,000. The committee unanimously voted in favor of the bid from Tropiano Construction for \$8,000. Next the Selectman need to give one last approval of the project and then Gregg will fill out the needed paperwork for Roberta at Town Hall.

6. **Funding update:** The Friends of the Topsfield Trails now have a fund balance of over \$30,000 that can go toward the preliminary work of phase IV of the trail. We have a quote from Stanteck Maps for \$28,400 for the needed design on this section of the trail. Jim MacDougal offered to do the wetlands delineation and topographic mapping. **Route 97 Parking Area:** Joe has made a proposal to Mass. Fish and Wildlife that we build a small parking area at route 97. Given the amount of people parking along both sides of the road for the canoe launch and the trail, a parking area would make that section of road, where the trail crosses, much safer. If we cleared the brush from the area ourselves, it's estimated the parking area would cost approx. \$7,000. The manual work will also help with our matching effort needed for the grant.
7. **2014 DCR grant application:** We can request up to \$62,500 of which they fund \$50,000 and the remainder is part of the 20% match. The three areas of work the group discussed for this year's grant application are: erosion control in the problem area using asphalt, cutting back brush and work needed for better shoulders along the trail, and any additional work needed on the Ipswich River abutments.
8. **Fundraising letter:** Joe will speak about a fundraising idea with Town Administrator Kellie Hebert to benefit the Friends of Topsfield Trails. He wants to develop a letter to send to all 2,000 houses and businesses in Topsfield to consider financially support the trail. He estimates this mailing could cost us about \$320 but there is a possibility of raising significant funds. Dave will take a first pass at a draft of the letter and forward to everyone for their editing.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM

Respectfully submitted, Dave Read