

MINUTES

The Education, Outreach, & Research Committee virtual meeting of the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts – April 2, 2024

Committee Members in attendance: Marybeth Chichester – FRCOG, Committee Chair; Rick Peltier – UMass, Public Health; Hannah Poplawski – Rowe, Notetaker; Hank Art - Williamstown

Committee Members absent: Rhonda Anderson – Ohketeau Cultural Center; Greg Cox – Hawley; Alice Houghtaling – Monroe

Staff/Partners in attendance: Lisa Hayden, NEFF/Admin Agent; Kate Conlin, NEFF/Coordinator; Dicken Crane, Board Chair

Call to order and welcome – 5:04 p.m.

Approval of January 11, 2024 minutes – H. Art moves to approve, seconded by H. Poplawski. All in favor.

Upcoming April 16th Committee Chair Summit/Executive Committee meeting—discussion of Committee updates, priorities, and requests to share with Board leaders to develop action steps

- Budget so far – \$200 stipend for speakers for past programs. We can pay for speakers through the Agent budget. If bigger than that, we could submit a funding proposal.
- Funding for a professional videographer, to capture the folks that care for our forests across the communities, used as an educational tool and community awareness. Shown on website and virtual Forest Center.
- Do we want this Committee to be more supervisory of the Woodlands Partnership new website? Other funding needs: pop-up booth for conferences; research we might need; better speaker system for hybrid meetings.
- Outreach strategy: seasonal calendar of annual outreach events such as town reports; different outreach tasks; mailings for outreach; collect email addresses – opt-in to periodic list serve updates; quarterly publicity of the Partnership and outreach to towns into mailings of tax bills or the like; town newsletters

Agent update: Colrain town information session April 30th; EOEEA grant: upcoming estate planning forum (April 25) and forest walk on climate-smart practices (May 4); Forest Center website; logo design contest updates and next steps; last call for Woodlands Partnership website major suggestions and edits –

- Colrain info session regarding upcoming town meeting vote to join the Partnership will be held at Colrain Central School on April 30th.
- As part of the 1-year State EOEEA grant to NEFF, supporting the Earmark funds and setting up an application process for private landowners, a three-part event series will occur. The first event, a “Setting Goals” webinar had 60 people register to attend. An upcoming estate planning workshop will be held at Franklin Land Trust in Shelburne Falls where Attorney Elizabeth Wroblicka will discuss conservation options and their potential financial and tax implications and benefits. Potential similar event to be hosted in Berkshire County. On May 4, John Sears of Hawley will host a woods walk on his property showcasing a planned shelterwood harvest to promote oak regeneration.

- The Forest Center website will debut at the Woodlands Partnership Annual Meeting in June.
- H. Art shares that logos can be crowdsourced, by designers all over the world, who are not paid unless the design is adopted. A logo contest could also be conducted in the Partnership region. K. Conlin reached out to local colleges but has not heard back yet. M. Chichester likes the text font Cider House created that can be used as a logo for now.

1. **Scheduling next Committee meeting(s)** – July 16, 5-6 p.m.

2. **Any item(s) not anticipated within 48 hours** - none

3. **Public comment** - none

4. **Adjourn** 6:05 p.m.