



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD
MICHAEL EMONS
STEVEN AUSTIN
STUART LANZ

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2025
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Tom Palshaw, Cynthia van Zelm, Donna Allen, Valerie Amsel, Robert Barone, Lindsay Neubecker (by phone), Stuart Lanz, Ann Harford

MEMBERS ABSENT: Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Michael Emons, Steven Austin, Dan Chamberlin, Bill Schultz

I. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. She announced that member Judi Manfre has resigned. There was no one present for Citizens' Forum.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. April 2, 2025

MOVED (ALLEN), SECONDED (PALSHAW) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 2, 2025 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew

Mr. Barone said that brush trimming and knot weed removal had been done at Windermere. The team provided a fix for the bridge located near the pond. They also hammered in some posts that were sticking up.

Ms. Amsel said she can see if there are extra Trex to fix the deck board near location H-4. Mr. Barone said 2 by 12s would be preferred. A box of screws is also needed. Ms. Amsel will follow up with Public Works.

Mr. Barone said the Friends of Franklin Trail demolished a bridge and built a new one. The Town of Vernon paid this cost.

Ms. Anderson will double-check with Public Works on proper disposal of old wood.

Ms. Anderson asked if they were able to move the tree near location H-4. Mr. Barone suggested that this be a Public Works job. Ms. Anderson will follow up with Public Works.

Ms. Anderson said Mr. Barone, Ms. Amsel, and Mr. Palshaw inspected the bridges at Windermere. Ms. Anderson said the stakes located near location H-2 need to be pounded in or covered.

Ms. Anderson complimented the Hockanum River crew for their work including removing the knot weed.

B. Conservation Report

Ms. Harford said there was no report.

C. Kiosks – Map – Ellington Highlands

Ms. Anderson said the Ellington Highlands' maps are ready to be put in the kiosk at the trailhead.

D. Emergency Signs

Mr. Palshaw said all emergency sign locations have been submitted for review to John Turner. Ms. Amsel put up the emergency signs at the Boothroyd and Bellante trails.

E. Ellington Highlands – Map

See above under C. about Ellington Highlands' map.

F. Easements for West Road

Ms. Anderson said there is no further update on the easements.

G. Eagle Scout Project – Bee Hotel

Ms. Anderson said the Bee Hotel has been completed by Boy Scout Sean Ellis and he did a great job!

H. Community Service Hours for High School Students Committee

Ms. Anderson said there was no update.

I. Facebook

Mr. Austin reported in an email to Ms. Anderson that he is working with Lauren Desrocher to transfer over “ownership” of the Trails Committee Facebook page to him.

J. Cleanup Day at Kimball – Cancelled (Rain)

The cleanup day at Kimball was cancelled due to rain.

K. T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program

Ms. Anderson said that she, Ms. Allen, and Ms. Amsel went to the Ellington Board of Selectmen to get their endorsement for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program application for an awning over the amphitheater at Batz. The Board of Selectmen approved submitting the grant; the next step is approval by the Ellington Planning & Zoning Commission which is May 19.

Ms. Anderson said the Trails team also visited with several Ellington Departments to get their views. Staff was supportive; Public Works wants details about who is responsible for maintenance of the amphitheater roof. Ms. Amsel said Public Works thought the awning may need to be re-stained after five to ten years.

Ms. Allen said two local vendors are interested in the project. The awning will be angled and custom built.

Ms. Allen said she has started to work on the grant application. Several interested parties have provided letters of support. Ms. van Zelm will help with a letter from the Trails Committee by the end of June.

L. Painting of Storage Bin

Ms. Anderson said she, Mr. Palshaw, and Committee member Mr. Schultz scraped and power washed the storage bin. The Ellington High School students still need to paint the structure. Ms. Anderson is going to follow up with the art teacher on timing.

V. New Business

Mr. Palshaw asked about widening a bridge at Ellington Highlands to assist with firefighters' access; if there is a fire on the trails, they would not be able to get their ATVs across the bridge at its current width. Ms. Anderson said the distance was only 50 feet and it may be ok to carry someone out from that point. Mr. Palshaw will get input from local firefighters and the discussion will be added to a future agenda.

VI. Subcommittee Reports**A. Treasurer**

Ms. Anderson said there is \$2,030 left in the budget for the current fiscal year. She mentioned several items to be bought that will likely use most of the rest of the budget: mulch, lumber, pollinator sign at Batz, and candy for Trails of Treats.

B. Maintenance

Ms. Anderson said there is a tree down at Kimball. She will ask Public Works to remove it as well as a tree down at Ellington Highlands.

C. Community Outreach**1. Cleanup Day on April 5th at Kimball – Cancelled (Rain)**

There was no discussion.

2. Cub Scout Batz Cleanup, April 12th – Cancelled (Rain)

There was no discussion.

3. Earth Day, April 26th – Didn't Attend (Rain)

There was no discussion.

4. Bird Walk at Batz – May 3rd, 2025

Ms. Anderson said there were eight total attendees for the bird walk conducted by Denise Anamani. Three of the birdhouses that had been built are being used by birds – two by swallows and one by bluebirds.

5. Cleanup Day at Crystal Ridge – May 10th, 9am start with Boy Scouts, Green Earth Club and any other volunteers

Ms. Anderson confirmed that the cleanup at Crystal Ridge will be on May 10 at 9 am pending weather, particularly as one of the goals of the cleanup is to place drainage stones in an area that may be too wet.

6. CT Trails Day – Ellington Highlands, June 7th, 2025 at 10am with Ms. van Zelm and Steve Austin

Ms. van Zelm said Trails Day registration opens on May 14. She noted that Committee members need to sign up even though the Committee is hosting the hike.

7. 3 Foragers – July

Ms. Anderson is still waiting for a date from the 3 Foragers.

8. CT Astronomy Night – August 12, 2025 at Pinney Field, 9pm – midnight

Ms. Anderson reiterated the date for this event.

9. Geologist – Ray Schaeffer

Ms. Anderson passed out a report on the geology of the Ellington Trails system from Mr. Schaeffer. A walk is planned for September 27 at 9 am at Crystal Ridge. Mr. Schaeffer will also give a talk at the Hall Memorial Library in the winter.

10. Jane Seymour Pollinator Talk at Batz

Ms. Anderson said Jane Seymour will give a pollinator talk on August 5 at Batz at 10 am.

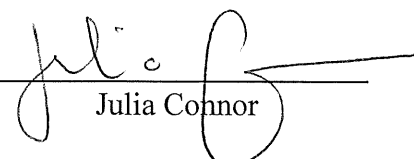
11. Trail of Treats – End of October, no date yet

Ms. Anderson said she is still waiting on a date for Trail of Treats from the Lion's Club.

The Ellington Historical Society is interested in a ghost walk at Batz. The Library is interested in reading *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* at Batz but this may be for a later time after an assessment is made about how the ghost walk goes. Ms. Harford will follow up with Dianne Trueb at the Historical Society on details.

VII. Adjournment

MOVED (ANDERSON), SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:32 PM.

Submitted by 
Julia Connor