

Trails & Open Space Committee Minutes  
August 4, 2021 – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Kevin Tollisen; Committee Members Phil Barrett, Ed Kinowski, and Benny Zlotnick; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Audra Hedden, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, Michael Naughton, Samuel Shulman, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Jeff Williams, Planning.

Chairman Tollisen called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mr. Zlotnick, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, the minutes of the July 7, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Zlotnick, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, to authorize the acceptance of Snowmobile Grant Funding. Unanimous.**

Mr. Kemper said there are three projects included in the resolution, the first in Malta, which would connect the Luther Forest Technology Campus to the Zim Smith, the second would connect the Saratoga County trail system across the Hudson River up into Warren County, and the third would connect the parking lot at the athletic fields in Galway into the existing S83A. All are subject to approval of the local Supervisor or town board. A SEQRA determination will be part of this resolution. This is 100% state aid.

**A motion was made by Mr. Zlotnick, seconded by Mr. Barrett, to authorize an amendment to the contract with Hudson River Valley Greenway for Construction of a portion of the Champlain Canalway Trail. Unanimous.**

Mr. Kemper said the original contract authorized \$210,000 but the bids that have come in are higher than was anticipated. The Hudson River Greenway has agreed to provide the additional funding. This is 100% state aid.

**A motion was made by Mr. Zlotnick, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, to authorize a contract with WMJ Keller Construction for the construction of a portion of the Champlain Canalway Trail. Unanimous.**

Mr. Kemper said seven bids came in, WMJ Keller was the low bidder. This contract will authorize construction of a portion of the Champlain Canalway Trail in the Village and Town of Waterford. This is 100% state aid.

**A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Zlotnick, to authorize approval of the 2021 County Trail Grants. Unanimous.**

Mr. Tollisen said there is \$75,000 in the budget and the total request is \$82,011.44, leaving a \$7,011.44 difference. We can take from the reserve and give each the requested amount or reduce everybody proportionally to their request. Mr. Kemper said the reserve is empty on trails projects.

Mr. Tollisen asked if it could be taken out of the open space reserve. A discussion took place on where the additional \$7,011.44 would be transferred from and it was decided that if the option to transfer from open space was not available then the money would be taken out of contingency funds. Mr. Kemper said next month he'll be talking about open space applications and they will probably be over budget as well.

*Zim Smith Feasibility Study Update and Grants Application*

Mr. Kemper said they are in the final stages of wrapping up the feasibility study of the Zim Smith north which would bring it from Oak Street into the City of Saratoga Springs. Once it's complete, the study will be sent to the Board of Supervisors. Available funding will be applied for using existing capital funds as a match.

*Saratoga County Community Forest Project Update*

Mr. Kemper said this was a \$391,000 award and they are working with the US Forest Service. They have been awarded the project but haven't accepted the grant yet. He anticipates this fall or early winter they will have a contract from the US Forest Service. Mr. Kinowski inquired about a report concerning the effects of invasive insects on trees in our area. Mr. Kemper said a study was never completed and they have seen some disease in the pine plantations but the hardwoods have not seen disease.

Mr. Kemper said they were notified by Saratoga PLAN of five farmland protection projects not related to county funding that did receive state funding of over \$4.4 million to permanently protect another 873 acres of farm in the County.

Mr. Hartnett and Mr. Naughton informed the committee of recently enacted state legislation that will allow project developers of large scale renewable energy projects to construct those projects without any local controls or approvals. A discussion took place regarding the details of the legislation and the possible effects on farmland and open space.

**On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Zlotnick, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Bridget Rider  
Deputy Clerk of the Board