

Town of Northumberland
Office of the Selectmen
19 Main Street
Groveton, New Hampshire 03582
603-636-1450

May 8th, 2019

Clinton Savage-Area Supervisor
NH Bureau of Trails-District #1
629B Main Street
Lancaster, NH 03584

Re: State Road-Lost Nation - ATV Trail Signage Request

Dear Mr. Savage;

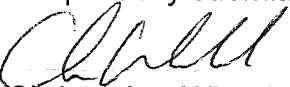
The Northumberland Board of Selectmen did meet in public session on Monday, April 15th, 2019 to discuss the annual trails permission request from Kilkenny Trail Riders. Discussion ensued about the Page Hill Road connector, the resulting 2-1 vote was to not allow this connection. There has been discussion involving this connector and establishing alternate routes for the last six years with no progress made.

The Board is making a request, in lieu of the closure of this connector, for the State to take down the signage on Lost Nation Road as there are currently no other town roads that connect with Lost Nation Road.

It is hoped the Board can come back to the State in the future with new information about an alternate connector between Lancaster and points North.

The consideration of this request by the State is greatly appreciated by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher Wheelock, Chairman



Michael Phillips, Selectman

James Weagle, Selectman

CW/blc

Encl. Copy of 4/15/19 minutes

**Town of Northumberland
Board of Selectmen
Draft Copy
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Monday, April 15, 2019

Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square

Time: 6:00 PM

Board Members Present: Christopher Wheelock, Chairman, Michael Phillips, James Weagle

Others Present: Al Rossetto, Nancy Mellow, Larry Meservey, Sr., James Gibson, Samuel Oakes, Shirley Carney, Chuck Kenison, Norm Cotter, Pete Marshall, Robert Barry, Melinda Kennett, Robert Reynolds, Oliva Tetreault, Geraldine Tetreault, Kathy Frechette, Dawn Houghton, Peter Pelletier, Michelle Randall, Richard Cotter, Michelle Winn, Jason Mellett

1. **Chairman opens the meeting:** Chairman Wheelock opened the meeting at 6:00 pm
2. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Chairman Wheelock asked for a motion to accept the draft minutes, as written, of the 4/1/19 business meeting. Motion made by Weagle, seconded by Phillips, no discussion.

Motion carried 3-0.

3. Selectmen Business:

a. Department Head Business:

Chief Gibson - Ambulance Dept.

Chief Gibson reported;

- 1) To date they have had 168 calls (they are out on one now)(print out included)
- 2) In 2018 at this same time they had 160 calls(print out included)
- 3) They are currently up 8 calls over last year's numbers
- 4) They have had 45 requests for transfers to date, 10 accepted, 35 declined of the declined;(print out included)
 - 3 - No medic
 - 2 - No second provider
 - 27 - No crew
 - 3 - Weather
- 5) Comstar Report gross commitments total \$119,938.00 Total collected for 2019 to date is \$54,171.41. (print out included)

Chief Gibson stated he mentions this each year, the first 3 months of the year they don't like to send out bills as deductibles are being met. They wait until about now to send bills out. Hoping to get paid instead of ambulance being part of the deductible.

over towards the snack shack.

Norm Cotter said before town meeting he asked about getting another police officer. He asked is this now going to happen?

Chief Pelletier stated he started in January with the hiring process, he has a couple of full time certified officers that have expressed interest in coming to work with him in the past few weeks.

The Chief does not want to proceed with hiring someone that we would have to send to the academy to get certified, if it works out with these two. He is working on working the process with the two certified officers that have expressed interest first.

Nancy Merrow asked if this was the appropriate time to ask about the editorial that was put in the paper?

Wheelock stated the article was put in and meant to be an April Fool joke. It was put in a week late, not by the control of the person that wrote the article. There is certainly some discussion that could occur on how it was received by everyone. Wheelock said he was not a fan of it, but has not had an opportunity to discuss the article with the person who wrote it and Phillips has been out of Town. He said it will be discussed.

Merrow asked was it not clear to the Democrat this was the intent? Weagle stated the Democrat never read it, they just put it in. Weagle said about 30 minutes after it started being discussed on FB, then the Democrat posted an explanation.

Merrow stated there were many that were not pleased.

Wheelock said the Town employees were directed to have all calls be directed to the Chief about the article and after that, if they had further questions, then contact a selectman. Wheelock said he gave his cell and home numbers to be contacted. Wheelock stated a few residents reached out to him on the street.

b. Vote to add Police Chief as authorized signer on account - Wheelock explained there is a police evidence account at Union Bank that the board needs to vote on. It has a small balance of \$158.00. Currently, there is only one signer on the account and it has been advised the Chief should be added in case he needs this money for evidence for operations which was the purpose of the account when set up.

Motion made by Weagle to add Chief Pelletier as a signer, motion seconded by Phillips. Vote 3-0, motion carried.

c. Annual OHRV (wheeled) vehicle trail permission request - Kilkenny Trail Riders

Wheelock described this year's request is asking for Page Hill Rd., Melcher St., Main St., Station Square for parking.

Bob Reynolds asked if Riverside Drive was on that list? Wheelock said it was not, he assumes it was going to come up for discussion at this meeting. It was asked if that could be put on.

Wheelock said last year at this renewal time it was discussed about going with a six month agreement and Wheelock was convinced to go with a full year.

Wheelock read last year's request for streets to access, he recalls discussion about

adding Riverside Dr. to get access down to the motel and he said he has done that for this year's request.

Phillips asked about the route, he stated he likes to look at it in chunks so Main St., Melcher St. Riverside Dr., motel, the bridge and access up North to MOMS.

Phillips asked Meservey if he needed something up North? Wheelock stated, he, Meservey and Gamache met last year with the Trials Bureau and Phil Beaulieu of DOT and discussed extending route 3. Starting on State street at the pool north to storage sheds. Wheelock state they are not decision makers, but they were willing to submit to the State deciding committee and were supportive of it.

Wheelock said that this is a State decision. Meservey stated that is coming up this coming Monday. Discussion ensued about Station Square parking, Main St., the question was brought up if this would include the covered bridge for access to Batch's? It was mentioned that would give access to State Street businesses and if the State approves, also MOMS.

Wheelock stated, personally, he is not in favor of Page Hill Road, he said that is a vehicle road, if someone wants to ride to Lancaster, if they can ride a road, they can ride in their vehicle . He doesn't see a huge benefit to the residents of Groveton.

Wheelock doesn't think it the benefits of this access outweighs the headaches the residents of those roads have to put up with. He said it is a partial 3 mile section on the Northumberland side that is being discussed.

He said it has been 6 years of a temporary situation, to try to find alternate routes. Wheelock asked Bob Reynolds how Kilkenny Trail Riders is coming with this effort?

Reynolds stated he talked to the new representative, Michael Cryans, today he is going to come up next Friday to talk about using the State property across Page Hill. Reynolds stated work was done last summer to try to get off of Page Hill and the property is real wet.

Reynolds asked if Phillips made contact with the The Nature Conservancy? Phillips said he had, their response was thank you for contacting us, but their policy is not to allow ATV(wheeled, motorized) traffic over their properties. They referred Phillips to their director, but Phillips has not pursued it further.

Reynolds said the next thing he wants to talk to Cryans about is the State owned railroad track and possibilities with utilizing this. Reynolds said the club is trying it is a slow process, but they are trying.

Meservey asked as one of the directors of the Northern Gateway Chamber of Commerce is to look at the businesses in the area and he received a call today inquiring about travel from campgrounds to ride the wilds.

Wheelock recognizes the benefit of Lancaster businesses benefiting from ATV recreation, but he does not know if the scale of benefit say 1-10 would equate to the same benefit for the Groveton area, whether in the big picture that is a 2.

Wheelock sees a lot of parking across from Dalton Mountain that trailer to that spot to ride, Wheelock asks if they can trailer to that spot, why can't they trailer to Groveton or say to MOM'S and ride from there. The Boards job is to look out for

what is in the best interest of our residents first. He said if we can accommodate Lancaster businesses or our businesses in the process, that is good. Wheelock's concern is after talking with Larry and Bob a couple of times, under the current agreement there is no way to get off Page Hill. He acknowledges work is being done, but wetlands/bogs around the area are making it difficult. Dry land takes them to Stark. The only dry land that connects is the railroad tracks. Wheelock has been telling residents that we are going to do this temporarily. What Wheelock sees right now, there is not a way to this accomplished what is being pursued. Wheelock said what has to be taken into consideration is the residents. Is there more gain than loss. It has been asked of these residents to put up with this situation for 8 years now and there is still no solution.

Reynolds says there are 7 people that live and work in this area that are in the club. We are trying to work and make a living in this area. Reynolds alluded depending on what is decided, it could affect their employment. Wheelock said I don't think closing one road is going to affect anyone's jobs or cause a business to close.

Reynolds stated anything that can help with bringing business this way should be considered. Reynolds pointed out it is hard working with the State.

Carney asked do we have a conservation commission and what is their view on protecting these wetlands?

Wheelock said this property all falls into State, and/or is private land, there is no Town land they would be asking to go across. If it was Town land and dry it would be easy. Wheelock would support crossing town land to accomplish this. Wheelock said the point to be made is we are weighing both sides of it. There certainly are mixed opinions up here.

Wheelock recalls the board has never had a 3-0 vote on any of the matters brought to them regarding ATV's. The Board has made concessions, on allowing and meeting to do what they thought was best. They have made a concession on allowing time for alternate routes to be exhausted. This has not gone unnoticed by the club and it is not for lack of trying on their part. Wheelock's opinion has not changed on ATV's, he is supportive them. What has changed is the Page Hill piece of it. He feels enough time has been given.

Reynolds asked have there been a lot of complaints and police matters? Pelletier stated there has been quite a few complaints over the years from residents. The Chief said when they do get pulled out of town to address a complaint, it is a haul to get back into town if something happens. It limits the PD's area they can cover effectively. The time that is spent out there has been limited. Activity tends to happen in the middle of the night. He said it is has been problematic to cover because of the hours. The priority is downtown.

George Kenison from Page Hill Road state he has been listening to the conversation. He said it is a pain in the butt to listen to the noise, modified exhaust systems are loud, which are illegal, dust is an issue, driving after dark. Police present has been minimal. He said the rules are clear 1/2 hour before and 1/2 after dark. He said they are roaring up and down the road all hours of the night. They are going 40 mph not 20. It is dusty and they are tearing up the road. He said he would be real happy if they put them on trailers and park them up to

MOM'S.

Wheelock asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

Phillips made a motion to approve the Melcher St., Main St., Station Square for parking and Riverside Dr., covered bridge connector.

It was asked are they supposed to go across the covered bridge? Weagle stated there is no need for them to go across if there is not a Lost Nation connector. It was mentioned Batch's and the motel would still need to be accessed. Wheelock said the Town has no control over the what the State may do on Lost Nation where that is a State Road.

Wheelock asked the Chief currently can they can travel on a road to get to the nearest trail access? Pelletier said that is his understanding.

Wheelock gave an example leaving his home, he can ride Maple St. to get to Second street to access the trail. That is the Chief's understanding. That is in the ordinance. Phillips asked does that come with a common sense understanding that you don't travel 10 miles to get to the trail head? Merrow recalled with snow machine travel they had to be within 500 feet of a trail.

Phillips made a motion to include everything on ATV added Riverside Drive and taking off Page Hill. Weagle wanted this as a separate motion.

Weagle said separate taking Page Hill Off. He is highly against doing this.

Phillips made a motion to authorize ATV (wheeled) vehicle travel over Melcher St., Main St., Riverside Dr., and Station Square for parking. Seconded by Weagle.

Vote 3-0. Motion carried.

Phillips made a motion to close Page Hill to ATV traffic with a letter to the State with that portion of Lost nation be closed. Wheelock asked would Phillips be willing to make that portion a separate matter? Phillips said yes.

Phillips made a motion to close the Page Hill Road to ATV traffic. Wheelock seconded.

Vote 2-1. Weagle was the no vote. Motion carried.

d. Cash Summary Review - Phillips stated these are numbers are for March, they are not reconciled yet.

Beginning of the month - \$1,039,078.26

Revenues - \$189,680.20

Expenses - \$434,152.35(includes payroll, payment to school, other payables)

Ending month - \$793,826.11

Rossetto asked about not having to take a TAN note, are we in the same position at this point as we were last year? Wheelock mentioned one of the reasons we did not have to take a TAN was because of the \$200,000 we had. He said that is really what kept us out of the TAN at the very end. Most of the year we were in good shape. Phillips can find out. Phillips followed up later in the meeting and said we ended the month with a \$150,000 more than last year.

e. Covered Bridge use request - Groveton/Stark Methodist Churches - Easter