

CREA Committee Minutes
September 9, 2009

Members in attendance were Linda Fuerst, Jim Strout, John Hammond, Rickey Poor, Chuck Gilbert, Katie Barber.

Keith Jones was also in attendance.

Linda reported that there were several reasons to postpone a celebration on CREA to next fall. The final stages of renovating the barn have not been completed. One of the trails may not be completed until late fall. Much of the area has just been repaired and seeded after the fair. The town and groups, which use the area, have little money set aside for the event. The selectmen have also agreed that it would be better to postpone.

Several projects have been completed over the past few months.

1. The Student Conservation Association (SCA) used CREA as a site for their leadership training. They created Rickey's Trail, which runs from the pond across from the school's driveway, through the woods to T.J.'s Trail. It provides another way to get to the baseball field and other trails.

2. The Highway Department made improvements to the farm road leading to the large hay field. They brought in gravel to raise the part of the road that had no gravel.

3. All spring, and early summer the Natural Wildlife Committee (Jimmy Fitch, Troy Simino, & Frank Parks) monitored the beaver activity at the culvert at the farm road. After raking off mud and sticks several times a week, they decided that they needed another solution in order to be able to control the water level of the beaver ponds on both sides of the road. They built a new, highly successful so far, baffling system. The Conservation Commission authorized payment for the cost of the materials to come out of Conservation Commission Funds.

4. The Highway Department, and George Edson from the Fair Association, put in a new pipe/culvert and gravel to drain water from the place where water in the soccer field swale and water from a culvert on South Parsonage Rd. meet. The water empties into the wetland. The Conservation Commission authorized payment for the cost of the materials up to \$1000 to come out of the CREA Fund.

5. To deal with the water coming from the other culverts on North Parsonage, George Edson, from the Fair Association made a long ditch along the edge of the field near the road. In the near future there will be a culvert going from the edge of the ditch to the edge of the wetland. The Fair Association will pay for the materials for that job.

6. As mentioned in the previous minutes, Kyle Witty volunteered to recreate the Babe Ruth sized ball field in the spring. He donated the time and materials for that job.

7. Doug Miller made some repairs to the deck of the bridge on Mike's Trail.

7. The Fair Association paid Mike Duval to smooth out and seed the fields that were damaged due to the rain and parking at fair time.

Several projects will hopefully be completed this fall.

1. The Loop Trail beginning and ending at the far end of the large hay field will be cut. The Boy Scouts will do this, possibly as an Eagle Scout project. The Conservation Commission authorized that \$300 be paid from the CREA Fund to pay Lew Shelly from SCA to draw up plans for both

Rickey's Trail and the Loop Trail. In addition he will draw up plans for a viewing platform into the wetland.

Leo Maslan asked Linda Fuerst to ask the committee if the scouts could camp in the woods while they are doing the work on the Loop Trail. No one on the committee objected. She will direct Leo to the selectmen for permission.

2. Josh Cloud will volunteer his time to build new dugouts for the baseball field. The logs were donated by Ryer Jaarsma and sawed into lumber by Jimmy Fitch. The Conservation Commission authorized up to \$520, to come out of the CREA Fund, for additional hardware and roofing to complete the job. Chain link fences will be put in front of the dugouts. The school and the Rec Association will spend \$75 each to buy the fencing from the Fair Association. The fair will donate and put in the 4x4 posts.

3. The Barn Committee hopes to finish the barn this fall. They have plans to finish the siding, put in new windows and doors, and paint. Much of the work to date has been done with volunteers. They have raised funds and written grants to pay for the materials and hiring of individuals to do some of the work.

The rest of the meeting was spent developing a Maintenance Plan for CREA.

Trails will be cleared throughout the year. The boardwalk on Mike's trail will be weed whacked. Volunteers will do this.

The bridge will also be checked frequently and maintained. Volunteers will do this. The Natural Wildlife Committee is monitoring the beaver activity at the bridge.

The hayfield near the barn and soccer field is mowed by the Fair Association south of the barn and hayed by Bobby Rice north of the barn. Both are under contract with the town.

The hayfield near the baseball field is mowed by the Fair Association, under contract with the town.

The larger hay field is hayed by Bobby Rice, under contract with the town.

The farm road will be maintained by the Highway Department.

The soccer field is mowed once or twice a week by the Fair Association, under contract with the town. There was some discussion of having the Fair's mower lowered and leveled to make for a better playing surface. Wayne said that he would work on the mower. There was also some discussion of how playing fields are supposed to be mowed. In addition, there are dry clippings that need to be blown off the fields. There is town equipment that can do the job. Dan said that he would do it this week. Jim Strout suggested that the field be aerated once a year. It was estimated that this would cost about \$550/yr. Katie Barber said that the fields need to be ready for play for fall soccer before Labor Day each year.

At this point, no one has been assigned the job of digging out and brush hogging the swales around soccer field. They were put in 20 years ago, and Rickey Poor thought that Mike Duval had dug them out 10 years ago. There needs to be a maintenance plan developed for this job. It was suggested that they be brush hogged every 1 or 2 years, and the swales dug out every 5 years.

Since there is no money allocated to dig them out this fall, Linda Fuerst agreed to put something in ConnectCornish to see if there were any individuals in town who would be willing to volunteer their time or equipment to do the job. Dan mentioned that we might get more takers if we found

a way to pay for fuel. That way volunteers wouldn't have to take money out of their pockets. It was estimated that it would cost about \$1000 to hire out the entire job. That would include the cost of hauling the dirt away. The ditches should be done with a ditching bucket. The work should be done in November after soccer season. If we get no response on Connect Cornish it was suggested that we contact Town Line Equipment to see if they would be willing to donate the use of a machine.

The baseball field is mowed by the Fair Association. The sports groups who use the field will keep the sand weeded.

The swales around the baseball field will also need to be dug out and have a maintenance plan put into place. Some of the dirt that is dug from the swales should be put on right field to raise it up a bit. There is a crushed culvert in the swale that will need to be replaced.

The culverts at the baseball field and soccer field will need to be monitored to be sure that water is running freely through them. Linda Fuerst agreed to check them and report to the Highway Department if they are plugged.

The beaver pond controls will be monitored and maintained by the Natural Wildlife Committee.

The barn will need to have a maintenance plan once the Barn Association completes the renovations.

John Hammind suggested looking into the possibility of taking the manure generated during fair time and depositing it on the hay fields as fertilizer.

In closing a number of suggestions were made to increase the amount of funds available for the maintenance of CREA. They were as follows:

1. Increase the line item in the town budget for maintenance of CREA.
2. Create a capital reserve fund to be voted on as a warrant article at town meeting.
3. Increase the line item in the school budget for maintenance of the playing fields.
4. Fundraising

The meeting ended at 8:30 P.M. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 11th at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Fuerst