

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
JOHNSTON PROPERTY USE COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 8, 2022**

Johnston Property Use Committee (JPUC) Members in Attendance: Nancy L. Smith, Julie Eckert, Bradley Rich, Affrille Degoma, Alice Kennedy, Nate Miller

JPUC Members Absent: Franklin (Bud) Lynch, Jr.

Ex Officio Members in Attendance: Ed Morris, Town Manager

Ex Officio Members in Absent: Kevin Marker

Called to order at 5:30 PM

Ed Morris started the meeting with introductions of the members. After each of the members introduced themselves, Ed Morris explained the process of choosing members and how the Select Board made a very conscious effort to create a diverse committee. He also stated his appreciation for the Select Board purposefully not appointing members who were vocal about their support or lack of support for the use of the property as presented by the Town Manager. The Select Board chose what they felt would be the most open minded applicants to review the data and receive public input to determine the best use of the property for the Town of Enfield.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee discussed the role of a chairperson. Ed Morris explained that this issue may lead to some passionate discussions especially when the public attends the meetings. It will be important that the chairperson of this committee is able to control and manage the meeting and may need to really control when public comment is taken. The committee entered into some discussion about who would be willing to serve as chair and co-chair.

Nancy Smith made a motion for Nate Miller to serve as Chair and for Alice Kennedy to serve as co-chair, that was seconded by Julie Eckert. Motion Passed 6-0

BUSINESS

Ed Morris asked Chair Nate Miller if he could continue working through the agenda during this first meeting, which was granted.

Ed Morris reiterated the passion behind this topic and the importance of running structured meetings. It was discussed that many meetings in the Town are ran more as an open discussion, but it may be important during these discussions that we maintain meeting structure, including controlling public comment. Mr. Morris discussed that the committee should decide whether it will take public comment during a certain time in the agenda, or after each subject discussed. He also explained that time limits can be established, but needed be established at the beginning of the meeting or before a public

comment period is opened. Mr. Morris also explained the importance of making sure the rules are adhered to and everyone from the public is treated in the same manner, with the same opportunity to share their thoughts.

After the meeting discussion, there was discussion about RSA 91-A. Nate Miller and Ed Morris both discussed that four or more members of this group constituted a quorum, the importance of making sure a meeting was warned and minutes were taken every time a quorum would be meeting for any purpose. Ed Morris explained the dangers of email and electronic communications and told the committee that he would try to send them information as blind copies, but that it was their responsibility not to reply all if communicating back. It was explained that it was OK to send generic information, such as when and where to meet, but no discussion should take place outside of the meeting.

Ed Morris then took some time to discuss the directives or mission of the committee as set forth by the Select Board. Mr. Morris explained that the Select Board had created the charge of this committee during the discussion on October 3, 2022. The main points of the discussion were that the JPUC would be charged with:

- Making a recommendation whether the Town should retain the property.
- If the recommendation is to keep the property recommendations should be made on:
 - Primary use
 - How the property will be accessed
 - What amenities should be provided
 - What should be done with the structures on the property
- Keep the discussion of what should be done with Shakoma Beach as a separate issue, not a recommendation of this committee.
- Meeting with:
 - The abutters to the property (as defined in the Towns Zoning Regulations)
 - Meet with the Conservation Commission, Rec Director and Recreation Board, Master Planning Task Force, and other groups the committee feels should be represented.
 - Public to receive broad public input

Nate Miller then worked with the Committee to set future meeting dates. It was decided that the committee would meet the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 5:00 PM. The meetings will start in January after the Holidays.

Prior to public comment the Committee asked Ed Morris to give a high level overview of the property. Mr. Morris explained that the property was railroad property. While in the possession of the railroad, individual leases were given for the camps that are down there. When the railroad gave up rights to the railway, NH State law reverted ownership of the property to the State of New Hampshire. In the late 1990's and early 2000's the State worked with the Town to transfer ownership of the land to the Town of Enfield. As part of the transfer, the camps that were leased on the property would maintain their lifetime leases, but there would be restrictions placed not allowing the leases to be passed on to their heirs or sell the leases. In April of 2022, the second of the two leases, on the main portion of the property, was given up and the Town of Enfield became the sole owner of the land and structures. It was at this time that town staff started working on what could be done with the property. On September 19, 2022, the Town Manager presented a conceptual plan to the Select Board to make the property into a public beach. With some concern from abutters and others in the audience, the Select

Board felt it was in the best interest of the community to form this committee to research what the best use of the land would be.

The Committee then decided that at the next meeting they would like to learn more about the history about the property, existing conditions, and learn more about the Town Managers proposal. Ed Morris said he would send out the meeting minutes from September 19th and October 3rd, along with a copy of the power point he gave, prior to the next meeting. The committee also decided that the committee members should individually visit the property prior to the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

After all the business of the committee was addressed, Nate Miller opened public comment.

Dave Beaufait made a comment that he was the Enfield representative to the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail. He then asked if the Town Manager could explain the use of subcommittees and the rules of 91-A. Ed Morris explained that it was important that a sub-committee be less than a quorum of the committee, and that it would be important that they not communicate with other committee members not assigned to the sub-committee, outside of a public meeting. Sub-committees can work on issues outside of public meetings, but need to return to the entire committee for discussion and decision making. There was explanation given to make sure that communication with the chair did not create a quorum, but communication could be made requesting time on the agenda for full committee discussion or updates.

Next Scheduled Meeting Date/Time: Thursday January 12, 2023 @ 5:00 P.M.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:32