



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Town Forest Committee

Date: 2023-06-13

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Agenda:

Purpose: Committee Meeting

Meeting Called By: Bill Sullivan, Chair

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting will be held both in-person at the location shown above and remotely on Zoom

Topic: Town Forest Committee

Time: Jun 13, 2023 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81633475160?pwd=bk1PZ01yK3owc1VsZTY4bVBySU5Gdz09>

Meeting ID: 816 3347 5160

Passcode: 912709

One tap mobile

+16465189805,,81633475160# US (New York)

+16465588656,,81633475160# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 646 518 9805 US (New York)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 816 3347 5160

- Proposed amendment to Reading Bylaw 8.8 Animal Control, to limit the number of off-leash dogs to two per handler in the Town Forest and on Conservation land (proposed language is attached)
- Discuss permitting and bidding for the invasive plant control project
- Update on September TF Appreciation Day with Ipswich River Watershed Association
- Approval of minutes for May meeting (attached)
- Other items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

Proposed Changes to the Reading General Bylaws

Article ____: Expand and clarify the definition of Effective Voice Control of an animal

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 8.8.1.3 Effective Voice Control as follows:

Effective Voice Control

An animal shall be deemed to be “under effective voice control” if it is within the handler’s sight, refrains from aggressive behavior, and the handler is carrying a leash. Dogs must not be allowed to jump on, bark at or approach anyone without their consent, and must come immediately when called. Any dog that behaves in a manner that a reasonable person would believe poses an unjustified imminent threat of physical injury to a person or to another dog is exhibiting nuisance or dangerous behavior as defined by Mass. General Laws c. 140 Section 136A and is not under effective voice control.

Article ____: Control of off-leash dogs in the Town Forest and Conservation Land

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 8.8.3.2 of the General Bylaws by (1) inserting a new Section 8.8.3.2.3, as follows:

Town Forest and Conservation Land

The maximum number of off-leash dogs shall not exceed two per handler in the Town Forest or on Conservation land. Any dog that does not remain under effective voice control or exhibits nuisance or dangerous behavior as defined in Section 8.8.1.3 must be placed on a leash or removed from the off-leash area immediately. Dog waste must be removed in accordance with Section 8.8.3.3. Dogs must be leashed when entering or exiting an off-leash area. Visitors who do not abide by these rules may be subject to eviction from the Town Forest or Conservation land and/or receive a fine under Bylaw Section 8.8 Animal Control as follows:

First Offense: \$50

Second Offense: \$100

Additional Offenses: \$300

Enforcing Person: Animal Control Officer

and (2) Renumbering the remaining section accordingly; or take any other action with respect thereto.



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~ 2023/05/30 ~
Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

█ █ **Town Forest Committee** █

Date: 2023-05-30 Time: 7 PM

Building: █ Location: █

Address: █

Purpose: Town Forest Management Session: █

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Tim Kirwan, Kurt Habel, Jeff Lamson, Bill Hughes, Bill Sullivan, Nancy Docktor, Tom Gardiner

Members - Not Present:

none

Others Present:

Jane Kinsela, DPW; Martha Moore and Chuck Tirone, Conservation

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Nancy Docktor

Topics of Discussion:

Meeting was held in-person and by video conference

- Discussed Friends of Reading Scouting “Trees for Reading” campaign to raise funds to replant trees in the TF in the areas where dead pine trees were removed. The flier will be posted on the TF kiosks and at the TFC table for the upcoming Friends and Family Day.
- Continued discussion from last month of the proposed Bylaw change that would limit the number of off-leash dogs per handler in the TF. Reading Police Department confirmed that in order to be enforceable, the Bylaw must specifically state the number of off-leash dogs per handler, along with the fines that could be imposed for violations. Incorporating a reference to the Town Forest Rules and Regulations would not allow enforcement. The Committee voted to approve the attached Bylaw change language that defines “voice control” and limits the number of off-leash dogs to two per handler. The purpose of this proposed Bylaw change is to address complaints from residents about large groups of off-leash dogs in the TF, and to enhance public safety. RPD will support this Bylaw change. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the attached language. It must go to the Bylaw Committee before going to the November Town Meeting for approval.
- Discussed the next steps for invasive plant control in the TF. It was recently learned that the entire TF is considered Priority Habitat under the Mass. Endangered Species Act (MESA). This means that the upcoming invasive plant control project must be approved by the Mass. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) before it goes out to bid. It must also be approved by the Reading Conservation Commission. Chuck T. said that while there is a Town-wide trails permit, a Request for Determination of Applicability may be needed for the invasives work on the TF trails. Bill S. will contact NHESP to get more information the MESA application process. The goal is to utilize most of the remaining ARPA funds for invasives control in the fall of 2023. The NHESP application will also include replanting native plants on the steep section by the gas pipe from which dead pine trees were removed in November 2022. The Committee voted unanimously to authorize up to \$10,000 of ARPA



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funds for Parterre Ecological to develop a planting plan and to plant native shrubs, berries and trees to secure the slope and provide wildlife habitat.

- Discussed Phase 4 of the dead pine tree removal program. The Committee decided to schedule Phase 4 for the fall/winter of 2024/2025. Recent storms have brought down a number of dead trees by the Pine Ridge Trail. Certified Forester Phil Benjamin will be asked to prepare the Forest Cutting Plan.