

ARTICLE 29: To see if the Town will vote to adopt as Chapter 9, Article X of the Town bylaws, the following:

Article X. Southborough Trails Committee

§9.35 Purpose

Recreational trails ("Trails") are an important asset of the Town and contribute to the quality of life of its residents. Establishing, maintaining, enhancing, extending, and monitoring Trails requires coordination among many public and private entities.

This bylaw establishes a committee that will be responsible for the Trails in the Town, through licensing agreements or easements, as defined below in §9.36 Functions.

The duties and organization of the committee are more fully described in the remainder of this Article X.

§9.35.A Establishment; Membership; Quorum; Qualifications

There shall be a Southborough Trails Committee ("Committee"), which shall consist of no more than five voting members appointed by the Select Board, and may include the non-voting members ("Associate Members") described below. Each voting member shall be a resident of the Town. A quorum for the Committee shall be a simple majority of voting members. The Select Board may, in consultation with the Committee, appoint non-voting Associate Members to assist it in performing its functions. Such Associate Members shall be residents of the Town.

§9.35.B Appointments; Terms

Voting members shall be appointed for two-year terms. The initial appointments shall be divided among one and two year terms, so as to establish overlapping terms. Associate members shall be appointed for one-year terms.

§9.35.C Organization

The members shall select, from among themselves, a Chair, Vice-Chair and a Secretary.

The Town Administrator may provide or arrange for administrative support to the Committee, including but not limited to: purchasing, assistance in obtaining resources from department heads, and access to legal services.

§9.35.D

Funding

The Committee may be provided a budget for consultants and other expenses. It shall submit its projected expenses to the Town's regular budget process. Any expenditures from its budget shall require a majority vote of the Committee, and be subject to the Town's policies and requirements for approval of such expenditures.

§9.36 Functions

The duty of the Committee shall be to create, enhance, extend, monitor, and maintain Trails on public property within the Town, exclusive of land that is exclusively regulated by another board or committee in Southborough, and to work to incorporate and/or extend such Trails into regional trail networks whenever possible.

The Committee shall promote passive recreation opportunities and educate trail users about the permitted use policies that protect the watershed, reservoir, wildlife, and the environment.

The committee may be charged with responsibility for Trail monitoring and maintenance obligations under any licensing agreements or easements to which the Town is (or becomes) a party, subject to the conditions of any such license.

Subject to legal requirements, the Committee is authorized to coordinate and work with any entity, public or private, that owns or is otherwise responsible for Trails within the Town.

Subject to legal requirements as may be imposed by the Select Board, the Committee may coordinate and enlist volunteers to, under the supervision and direction of the Committee, assist it with work on the Trails, including clearing, building, mowing, monitoring and other maintenance tasks.

The Committee shall work with other public and private entities, including, but not limited to the Town's Recreation Commission, Council on Aging, and Schools, to publicize, encourage use of, and develop programs for the Trails.

The Committee may develop applications for grants and/or inter-entity agreements in furtherance of its duties, and recommend that the Select Board execute them on behalf of the Town.

From time to time the Committee shall report on status and progress to the Select Board and the Town Meeting; or act or do anything in relation thereto.

Proposed by: SELECT BOARD

Select Board Recommendation: Support (3-2-0)

Advisory Committee Recommendation: Support (6-1-0)

Summary: *This article replaces the current ad-hoc Southborough Trails Committee with a standing committee. The existing committee was established in 2013 and has proven to be effective at establishing and maintaining trails. This bylaw makes it a permanent committee with clearer responsibilities and a more flexible organization.*