

## **Minutes: Bethel Business Association meeting – October 1, 2008**

Chair Rick Benson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Secretary's report was accepted as submitted. Treasurer's report indicated a checkbook balance of \$2,016.56, and a total cash balance of \$5,287.06. The Treasurer noted that donations from businesses for the flowers decorating the downtown area did not match the costs, and so BBA funds had to make up the difference. The report was accepted as submitted. Membership was reported at 63, five more than last year.

**Branliere Town Forest Recreation Trail walk:** Fifteen people showed up for the hike along the proposed trail route, while 25 to 30 folks attended the post-walk discussion and pizza dinner. The most prominent ideas to surface were nuts-and-bolts issues of getting the trail finished at minimal cost. Toward that goal, some agreed that selective logging might be contracted by the town, which could enable the raising of some cash as well as some initial development of trails for skidders and other equipment. Those, in turn, could serve as the basis for recreation trails to be developed further.

It was also suggested that selective logging would allow some views to be opened up. As the land provides long views toward 107 and over Bethel's commercial district. Rick noted that he has received plenty of feedback from people since the event. Rick and John Dutton will use a GPS to find the corners of the property, providing clearer delineation of the area proposed for the trail.

**Downtown cleanup:** The Sept. 6 cleanup of the downtown parking lot was deferred to Sept. 7 due to rain, and resulted in removal of weeds, litter, sand and gravel from the lot. Bethel Mills cleaned up the area immediately adjacent to the street. An important next step for the downtown beautification will be to replace the old benches, possibly with granite ones. Sponsors might be found to help defray costs if we offer plaques for inscriptions of their choice to be included on the benches. There was also discussion of trimming or replacing the trees planted in the beds between the parking lot and sidewalk.

**Candidates' forum:** This event is scheduled for Oct. 16 at the Whitcomb cafeteria. Rep. Sandy Haas and Henry Holmes have confirmed attendance. Rick will follow up with the Senate incumbents and challengers to see if they'll attend.

**Business inventory project:** Rick spoke to Neal about this project, but not much has been done due to ongoing coordination with Vermont Castings (which, thankfully have paid off with new jobs for Bethel). More news on the business inventory may be forthcoming in November.

**Holiday decorations for downtown:** Rick will talk to the fire department about helping decorate with some equipment. November 3 is the most likely date. The flags will be taken down at the same time that decorations are being put up.

The next BBA meeting will be the candidates' forum as previously noted, while Nov. 5 will be the next regular meeting. The next BBA mixer will be Thursday, Nov. 20, focusing on a history of the Black Forest Café. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Jamal Kheiry  
Secretary