

February 28, 2014

To the Open Space Committee:

In the interest of transparency in town government, please include this letter and your responses in the Open Space Committee minutes as soon as possible, for the purpose of entering both into the public record. (At the 10-9-2012 meeting of the OSC, the Committee voted in favor of accepting official correspondence—by mail or in person—and posting said correspondence on the web-site.)

Please note that Minutes for all 2013 OSC meetings were not posted until December 16, 2013, following a written request from my husband.

I am requesting clarification on the following:

- ◆ The Minutes of 5-7-13 state that there was discussion of my leaflet “requesting delaying haying at the conservation areas.” This is misleading and only partly accurate. The title of the flyer—a copy is attached —is *Protect Bobolinks and Other Wildlife at Mt. Jefferson Conservation Area*. The purpose of the brochure was to educate the community and urge residents to vote at the upcoming town meeting for a delayed hay-mowing plan as part of a strategy to conserve wildlife.
- ◆ Please explain the Chair’s unilateral decision to “contact” the Agricultural Commission and describe the content and objective of the contact. (Minutes of 5-7-13)
- ◆ On 5-7-13 the OSC was aware of the upcoming (June) town meeting warrant item regarding Mt. Jefferson. The OSC and its members were involved in an organized effort to defeat the warrant item. Yet I could find nothing about this in OSC Minutes. Please explain.
- ◆ The Minutes of 1-7-2013 indicate that the OSC discussed haying schedule options to protect nesting birds, and state the OSC will continue “to look for a way to try to make it possible within the confines of the hay management plan and the haying contract.” Please state what options the OSC explored and where the OSC sought information, e.g. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, local bird-friendly farmers, MassWildlife, USDA, local naturalists, MassAudubon, professional consultants, etc.
- ◆ After trying for many years to get the OSC to consider bird-friendly practices at Mt. Jefferson, I went to the Selectboard in November 2013. I was asked to return on 1-28-2013. In preparation for this meeting, the OSC and its members organized and developed a strong attack involving numerous community members and the presentation of written materials to the Selectboard. I could find nothing about this in OSC Minutes. Please explain.

Thank you.

Wendy Howes

Cc: Anita Scheipers, Town Administrator

