

**HOPKINTON LAND TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**October 27, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Marilyn Grant, *Chair*, Sarah Windsor, *Vice- Chair*, Carol Baker, *Secretary*, Mary Gibbons and Cyndy Johnson, *Trustees*. Harvey Buford, *Hopkinton Conservation Commission*. Peter Jensen, *Peter S. Jensen and Assoc, LLC*.

**ABSENT:** Tom Thompson, *Trustee*.

*Per the Hopkinton Town Council, and due to the COVID-19 virus, this MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY via Zoom.*

**A. Call to order** at 7:02 by Grant with 5 trustees, and therefore a quorum, present.

*To accommodate visitor Peter Jensen, Baker made a motion, seconded by Gibbons to move report of Land Management and Stewardship Depot Square to beginning of meeting*

Land Mgmt and Stewardship

Depot Square/Brushy Brook Trail update:

Peter Jensen, contractor that is currently building the trail, discussed issue of parking alignment. The approved plans don't align with the available space. Jensen suggested 4 diagonal spots and an accessible spot instead for a total of 5 spots. Discussion ensued with logistical considerations and other options. The shed will have to be moved a small amount, while adding spots on the southern side would require clearing of all trees. The handicapped spot is linked to access route below via trail. Correct verbiage on signage is crucial. Jensen agreed to assist with this. Also discussed whether to approach Christine Austin, owner of day care center next door, if we could use the grassy area on her property; consensus was to table this for now due to time considerations. Grant, Buford, Windsor and Johnson will meet with Jensen to review this and finalize plans at 9 AM tomorrow.

Jensen updated progress report, all helical piles and cross members in for boardwalk completed, with first box framed. Trail from boardwalk to very end is complete, side trail is now partially surfaced. Trail up to parking lot has been excavated. Estimating 3 more weeks of work, done before Thanksgiving, weather dependent.

**B. Approval of previous meeting minutes:** Minutes of September 22, 2020 Public and Executive minutes were reviewed and approved, passed unanimously, including sealing of Executive Minutes.

**C. Accounting of funds:** Citizen's \$24,333; Webster \$665,824

**D. Reports**

Chair:

Meeting schedule:

- One meeting on November 17, move annual meeting to sometime in 2021.
- Joanne Riccitelli from the South Kingstown Land Trust is reaching out to fellow Rhode Island land trusts. She is working with Rupert Friday (RILTC), David Gregg (RINHS) and Kate Sayles (NRICD) on the idea that we could apply as a state to the NRCS RCPP program for a significant (~\$5-8 million) grant to protect RI's forests through conservation easements via NRCS, and their Healthy Forests Reserve Program. She is looking for an idea of the number of projects and acres that could use this sort of funding over a 5-year period. Trustees

discussed various properties and will continue reviewing for next meeting.

- Grant reported that we only received one response for the James property RFP for survey from Garofalo for \$31,000. Discussed using Richmond template for RFQ to get qualified surveyors, Baker will follow up with Richmond Land Trust Chair Suzanne Paton. We don't need the survey until we close on property next year.

Subcommittees:

Advocacy: Status of subcommittee; update on plans before the Planning Board

Buford, Windsor and Johnson attended Town Council meeting on behalf of HLT regarding the Comolli Solar project on Chase Hill Rd. Our comments are on record for support of the project with the Land Trust getting easements on river frontage. The hearing was closed, Town Council will vote on November 2.

Policy: Use of Bicycles on Land Trust Property: No update.

Friends/HLT: Thirteen people showed up on 10/17 to clear beginning of trail of junk and brush.

Johnson, Anderson and Grant developing list to send fundraising letter for additional funds. At printers now, will go out soon.

Land Mgmt and Stewardship:

Crown Farm Preserve update:

Sign installed by Buford and Caleb and Mal Grant; posted ½ mile boundary signs, now totalling about 1 mile. Less than ½ way done.

Need new HLT property signs, Gibbons will order

Depot Square/Brushy Brook Trail update: Moved to beginning of meeting.

Grills Preserve:

Forestry Management Project: Assuming wood is being removed by contractor.

Invasive removal plan for interior field: Thompson reported via email that the was 90% effective, and shared the MOU for Marsh's which includes the following field improvements: Removal of invasive trees from the field, use of brush hog over the field, and shall extend the field to its historic boundaries which may include removal of some larger trees, aggressive harrowing of the field, using best practices, preparing the field for planting and planting quality hay seed. Gary Marsh is agreeable with MOU and will sign by end of week, then Grant will sign. Windsor made a motion to accept the MOU as written, seconded by Gibbons. Passed unanimously.

Grills Wildlife Sanctuary:

Encroachment issue by Rhodes: Nothing new for the moment.

New encroachment on River front: Buford reported that approximately 400 sq ft of riverbank have been cleared of all brush and trees and maybe 25-30 ft of riverbank frontage has been cut clean of roots and trees and shaved off vertically. About 3 ft of riverbank has been removed along this vertical cut. Grant spoke with Fox from WPWA who suggested person who first noticed it report it to RIDEM. This is off the East Loop Trail.

Kenyon Crossroads: Beaver Flood trail

We are still hoping that Peter Jensen will have a chance to look at this section of trail that to see about putting in helical piles but Depot Square project takes precedence.

Funding and Grants: Grant spent time with Finance Director Rosso to work on logistics to finish paying Jensen and to request cost of James survey comes from the Webster account.

**E. Old Business:** None

**F. New Business:** LIDAR funding – Manitou Hassanash Preserve. The Land Trust approved \$2,000 for project in July 2019, but expired January 2020. Project is ready to move forward. Johnson made a motion to re-authorize \$2,000 to assist funding of contract to GeoNAV group for Manitou Hassannash Preserve ground-based LiDAR project, Baker seconded. Passed unanimously.

**G. Public Forum:** None

**H. Executive Session** [pursuant to RI Gen. Law Ch.46 42-46-5a (5)]. At 8:17 PM, Johnson moved that we go into executive session, pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(5), to discuss potential land acquisitions. Gibbons seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Reconvene in Open Session at 8:35 PM

Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session: Johnson made a motion to seal the Executive Minutes, seconded by Baker. Passed unanimously.

**I. Adjourn** 8:37 PM

Respectfully submitted  
Carol Baker, Secretary