

HOPKINTON LAND TRUST
TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

February 28, 2022

Crandall House

PRESENT: Sarah Windsor *Chair*, Jason Parent, *Vice-Chair*, Carol Baker, *Secretary*, Tom Thompson, Marilyn Grant and Cyndy Johnson, *Trustees*. Alana Russell, *public*.

ABSENT: Mary Gibbons, *Trustee*

- A. Call meeting to order** at 7:04 by Windsor with 6 trustees, and therefore a quorum, present.
- B. Approval of Previous meeting minutes** Minutes of January 24, 2022 Annual Meeting and Public minutes were reviewed, minor corrections were made. Grant made a motion to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Johnson, passed unanimously.
- C. Accounting of Funds:** \$17,831 Citizens. Windsor reported we have received all of real estate transfer fund for this fiscal year, \$10,000 from Town. Webster \$270,590. The history of the initial funding of the Land Trust and the real estate transfer fee was reviewed. Initially, the Land Trust received 100% of the real estate transfer fee, which was created to purchase Open Space.

D. Reports:

Chair: Meeting Schedule: Next Land Trust meeting will be March 28.

- Windsor reported on current contract employee, Chris Anderson, who performs administrative tasks for the Land Trust, has been paid \$20/hr for the past several years. Windsor recommends we increase her hourly rate to \$22 as her work has been excellent and is huge help to the Chair and keeps us all organized. This was discussed and will be placed on the agenda next month for consideration.
- Budget workshop: Grant and Windsor distributed a budget for next fiscal year to be shared with the Town Council at the budget workshop this week. Budget was reviewed and approved as is, and all thanked them for their hard work.

Subcommittees:

Advocacy: Update on planning board:

Johnson reported the following:

1. Planning Board will meet on March 2 on the Brushy Brook 140 units, 300 acre proposal for discussion, consideration and possible vote on the project.
2. Skunk Hill Solar: Johnson and Windsor will walk the trail to Witch Rock with Jason Tefft in order to review access plans. Currently waiting for better weather.
3. Comolli Solar easement to HLT is being reworked by Joelle Rocha, project lawyer, and HLT's John McCoy. We have been denied access through Unit 1. Other items of interest are still under consideration.

Friends/HIT: Project list; grant for HIT laptop; fundraising status for Brushy Brook.

Windsor reported that the Friends have received a \$500 grant for a computer for use by the Land Trust. Total cost of the computer is \$880, Chris Anderson of the Friends group is requesting that we contribute \$190 which is 1/2 of the remainder of the total cost. Parent made motion to contribute \$190 to the Friends to split the remainder of the cost (\$380) with the Friends 50/50. Seconded by Grant. Passed unanimously.

Land Management and Stewardship:

Prioritize project list for Sunset Design contract

Windsor encouraged us to complete certain properties, suggesting Pelloni and Crown. All agreed this made sense. Baker said she will contact Buford to get GIS trail data layers. Parent and Baker will work on uploading to the Web GIS app to locate trails in field for relocating and flagging so HIT volunteers and/or Sunset Design can clear the trails.

Depot Square/BB trail update: Grant reported the following

- Grant, Thompson and M. Windsor met with Peter Jensen at the site Jan 27 to assess current conditions and plan for work on relocation of the trail from Mechanic St. Fallen trees have been removed by Town DPW and Sunset Design and SD also lowered the kiosk by the fire station to meet ADA standards.
- Second washout area of approximately 30' was discussed with suggestion for installing a drainage culvert under. Wetland permit would be required as well as discussion with and permission from abutter John Matson as the work to divert the runoff would be done on his property.
- Grant will speak with Jensen in the next few days to try to get more specific on when the relocation work can begin. Also consult re: repairing the small washout to see if it recurs and allow time for permitting and construction plan.
- Thompson to ask Tuthill from Sunset Design for estimate on making small parking area at Mechanic St site by the shed. This can then be used in grant application from Wood Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council (see below)

Funding and Grants

Grants of up to \$4,000 are available from Wood Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council. Discussion centered on various projects to be considered, work on Depot Square/Brushy Brook taking precedence. Consensus is to work on the upper area which is overgrown and convert into a small parking lot, perhaps ask Sunset Designs to install with grant funds. We will need material list and design for grant. Thompson will discuss with Tuthill.

E. Business: Trustee terms and plans; potential new members

- Alana Russell expressed interest in becoming an associate member, will put on agenda for next meeting.
- Windsor reported a resident, Melissa Alb, reached out to her expressing interest in the Land Trust, Windsor suggested she come to next meeting.

F. New Business: Discuss meeting venue and hybrid/remote options going forward

- With the governor lifting some Covid restrictions with regard to in person meetings, Windsor asked trustees for their thoughts about in person vs. hybrid meetings (in person and virtual)

hybrid meetings require someone with IT qualifications to monitor the virtual feed, which can be challenging and distracting. All present expressed desire for in person meetings only.

G. Public Forum: None

H. Executive Session : None

I. Adjourn: 8:38 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Baker, Secretary