

HOPKINTON LAND TRUST
TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

August 25, 2020

PRESENT: Marilyn Grant, *Chair*, Sarah Windsor, *Vice- Chair*, Carol Baker, Secretary, Mary Gibbons, Ed Wood and Cyndy Johnson, *Trustees*. Harvey Buford, *Hopkinton Conservation Commission*, Tom Thompson, *Associate Trustee*

ABSENT: None

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

A. Call to order at 7:08 by Grant with 6 trustees, and therefore a quorum, present.

B. Approval of previous meeting minutes: Minutes of July 28, 2020 Public and Executive minutes were reviewed and approved, passed unanimously, including sealing of Executive Minutes.

C. Accounting of funds: Citizen's \$18,816; Webster \$665,730

This balance does not include \$10,000 check from Reivity deposited first week in August from Bradford Solar Project.

D. Reports

Chair:

Trustee appointment: Tom Thompson has been approved by the Town Council for current trustee vacancy on the Land Trust.

Meeting schedule: September 22, October 27. Annual meeting November 11.

Open Meetings Reference Guide: Grant also reported we should have received an email from the RI Secretary of State office containing a link to a document detailing updated guidelines for holding meetings by video conferencing (28 pages long) and encouraged all of us to review.

Subcommittees:

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

Johnson reported about proposed solar project on a portion of AP 2 Lot 73, aka the old Perry Motor property. This property abuts the Pawcatuck River and property owned by the Land Trust. Johnson and Windsor shared a draft letter they have written to the Town Council in support of the project as we are interested in acquiring the river frontage which abuts to the west of Plat 1 Lot 3. This river frontage contains the ROW used by the Land Trust to access the the Polly Coon foot bridge area by vehicle for maintenance or other needs. Wood made a motion, seconded by Baker, approving this letter being sent to the Town Council. Passed unanimously.

PR: Wood brought up the subject of writing an annual report of the Land Trusts activities to share with the public

Policy: Use of Bicycles on Land Trust Property.

Gibbons reported that she spoke with several Land Trusts in RI regarding their policies on bike on their trails; there is not one consensus. Most bikers are respectful and of both trail use and hikers, but not all. Discussion ensued with regard to trail damage due to overuse, advent of Ebicycles and enforcement. All were in agreement that we need to develop a policy, but needs further thought and discussion.

Friends/HLT: Trail Work and Crown Farm event August 30

Crown Farm Event as part of the RI Land Trust Days has been cancelled, as well as the remainder of the Music in the Valley concerts due to COVID.

Friends received legislative grant to buy a large trail mower: Buford facilitated the DR trail machine purchase and reports he has used it with good results at Crown Preserve.

Land Mgmt and Stewardship:

Crown Farm Preserve update: parking, trail work, gates

Buford reported that trail work is continuing.

Depot Square/Brushy Brook Trail update:

Wood reported that the trail crew will be start building the trail the last week of September continuing through the end of October or beginning of November. Jensen to visit in next couple weeks.

Grant reported we have a proposal from the SRICD for supervising the work per the RIDEM wetland permit. Cost would be \$45/hour and would take approximately 4 site visits, including writing the reports. Gibbons made a motion, seconded by Windsor to approve proposal of SRICD supervising the construction @ \$45 / hour, not to exceed \$720. Passed unanimously.

Johnson reported she, Wood and Thompson met with Mike Hoxsie regarding plantings along trail.

Wood presented a final cost estimate of \$93,717. Jensen crew taking care of own housing. We are short \$23,500. Several individuals have offered donations, but we will need to do some fundraising.

Mechanic St. shed, security issues

No new news

Grills Preserve:

Wood reported that the forestry management project has started and the forester, Marc Tremblay is keeping him apprised of progress.

Invasive (Tree of Heaven) removal plan for interior field

Thompson reported he applied the first treatment on July 30, sprayed small trees, worked well, but did not work as well on the larger trees. He is considering a second treatment. However, the field itself is not in great shape, there is much mulch and less hay seeds, and trees and other invasives are encroaching from edge of fields.

Thompson said he spoke with Lucas Marsh, who has the lease on field. He has some plans to improve the field including removal of invasive trees, brush-hog the entire field, including extending the field boundaries to the abutting wood line, aggressively harrow field chopping up existing sod and all plants, plow the field to prep for seeding, and then seed for agricultural hay. All agreed this sounded like good management practices.

Grills Wildlife Sanctuary:

Encroachment issue by Rhodes: letter sent by lawyer 2013. Discussion ensued on best

way to proceed. Grant to meet with Thompson and Buford the beginning of September. This is a long standing issue. Last meeting we decided to begin some action in September with Tom and Harvey expressing interest because of their knowledge of the early negotiations for the Grills properties. We need a site visit. Baker will review past aerial photos to track any changes.

Kenyon Crossroads: Beaver Flood trail

We are hoping that Peter Jensen out to look at the section of trail that to see about putting in helical piles. Not sure that is something is willing to fit in during his visit in next couple weeks.

Funding and Grants: RIDEM Open Space Grant

Award letter and requirements received for James property. We need to start with a survey.

E. Old Business: N/A

F. New Business:

Thompson reported on a challenge given to RI libraries to implement innovative programs during Covid. Both directors of the 2 libraries in Hopkinton, Nomi Hogue at Langworthy and Heather Fields at Ashaway library are both interested in a program called Story Walk, where each page of a book is laminated, and placed along a hiking trail. All trustees agreed this was a wonderful idea and thought the following properties would be promising: Grills Sanctuary, Hoxie and/or Kenyon Crossroads. Fields and Hogue and are going to send us a proposal. The libraries would cover all the costs.

G. Public Forum: None

H. Executive Session [pursuant to RI Gen. Law Ch.46 42-46-5a (5)]. At 8:15 PM, Gibbons moved that we go into executive session, pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(5), to discuss potential land acquisitions. Wood seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Reconvene in Open Session at 8:24 PM

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

I. Adjourn 8:24 PM

Respectfully submitted
Carol Baker, Secretary