



Winooski Valley Park District

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Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Meeting

September 20, 2016

The meeting began at 4:35 PM.

Present: Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Tom Malinowski (Essex), Dave Crawford (South Burlington), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Nick Warner (Executive Director), Rita Dessau (Williston)

Absent: Andrew Bolduc (Winooski), Aaron Keech (Burlington), Lauren Chicote (Programs Director)

Acceptance of Minutes: Minutes of August 16, 2016 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Public Comment Period: No guests were present at the public comment period.

Additions to meeting agenda: Susan requested that board use of electronic communication be added.

Financial Reports: EAHM had over \$15,000 in small-check contributions this calendar year, which is optimal. Financial status is good, as expected. WVPD fiscal year 2017, currently in operation, was reviewed, together with 8/31/16 summary report generated 9/14/16 by Mary Stuessy (please see). Nick reported that he is completing a lengthy registration for the Federal Surplus Property Program, to enter a vehicle lottery that could provide WVPD with a used pick-up truck, costing WVPD maximum of \$1000. Financial Audit has been completed, with no material faults discovered, despite having been many changes in bookkeeping procedures and personnel over the years. AM Peisch will return in 2 weeks for final visit, and will send a letter to trustees, possibly in November.

Proposal of Agreement between WVPD and City of South Burlington For Natural Area Maintenance and Project Management Services (please see): Dave is considering being employed as consultant for City of South Burlington in project management. He would not be involved in choosing who would bid for the fee for service contract. Susan stated there would be no conflict of interest in that position, as long as it is clear that he would be a consultant for City of South Burlington. Tom Hubbard, the deputy city manager, would issue the work order, not Dave. Consensus of the board was that Dave's possible employment by City of South Burlington as project management consultant would not be a problem for WVPD.

Susan suggested that the agreement between WVPD and City of South Burlington should make it clear it is a pilot project. Nick said that Ben Waters, our part-time seasonal worker, would be a main resource for this, and that the project might be reconstruction of a washed-out bridge in Wheeler Park. Use of our personnel in autumn could be a precedent, if pilot project succeeds, for future "shoulder-season" work, leaving personnel free to care for WVPD parks during summer. Ed Fitzpatrick, WVPD lawyer, is currently reviewing the contract. Susan stated that we should make sure that what we indemnify for is covered by our insurance, and also that adding time onto seasonal workers employment does not involve us in providing medical

insurance for them. Sonja stated that section 3, point 5 should include local, state, and regional permit and rate clearances for projects. Under section 4, point 2, Sonja stated it could read, "in response to scope of work provided by City of South Burlington, WVPD will provide work orders for specific project elements." She also said that in section 5, costs, GSA rate may differ for trucks from cars.

Dave moved that the board approve the contract with the understanding that Ed Fitzpatrick, WVPD lawyer, would make appropriate final edits to it. Tom seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the board.

Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget Draft was presented (please see). Total proposed operating revenue for FY 2018 was \$370,350. Dave suggested that in future, columns be added between categories to show changes from previous year, and that expenses of programs also be shown in an auxiliary budget. Susan asked that we be ready to clearly inform the public about the rationale for the approved 5% increase in staff salaries. Nick cited the expanded roles of each staff, identified in new job descriptions. Sonja stated we had to catch up to market salaries to stay competitive, after 4 years of level funding. Nick also said that the requests to the park district by the various member towns are all being addressed at this time. Susan and Sonja questioned the accuracy of the decrease in employee benefit expenses (\$71,208 was budgeted for 2017; \$65,036 is proposed for 2018). Dave moved that the proposed operating budget for 2018 be accepted, with the understanding that the question about the decrease in employee benefit cost be resolved. Susan seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously, with the expectation that a friendly amendment to benefit cost could be made.

Long Range Planning, with possible High Meadows Grant: Nick stated he wrote a \$5,000-7,000 grant to High Meadows Foundation to focus on our asset inventory. They would work with our board to have guided discussion, planning for the long-term viability of WVPD assets as currently defined, as well as considering our future development.

Drone Policy: Further requests for drone use at WVPD have not been made, since spring. Larger parks and government entities are currently working out policies, and we will await information from these endeavors.

Public Records and Electronic Communications: Susan presented the most recent publication of the open meeting law, by the Secretary of State. It states that group email by board members is acceptable for routine procedural matters such as scheduling meetings and announcing agenda items. However, email would not be appropriate for a quorum of board members to discuss business. When the board discusses business in the meetings, there is opportunity for the general public to learn about its decision-making process. In e-mail discussions, the public would be excluded automatically. However, if board members have comments to make between their attendance at meetings, they could send them to the executive director, and he would then present these comments at the next meeting.

Adjournment: Susan moved to adjourn at 6:35 PM. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: October 18, 2016, 4:30 PM

Respectfully prepared by,

Rita Dessau, Secretary