



Winooski Valley Park District

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Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Meeting

January 17, 2017

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), Aaron Keech (Burlington), Lauren Chicote (Programs Director).

Acceptance of minutes: Minutes of November 15, 2016 were reviewed and accepted.

Public Comment Period: No members of public were present.

Meeting Agenda Changes: Updates on Colchester Wolcott property, and Williston membership funding were added. High Meadows was unable to send a representative to the meeting; discussion of long-term planning was postponed for the next 2 meetings.

Financial Reports for EAHM and WVPD: EAHM shows total net income Jan 1-Aug 2016 of \$22,215 by Nov 5, 2016, which is much higher than usual. They have been fund-raising very successfully. They will be using the same bookkeeper as we do, in coming months, to make record-keeping more uniform. The WVPD Quick-Books budget was reviewed with Lauren. An item, #4700 "contracted parks maintenance" was added to the income portion, which currently represents salaries for Tim and Ben at the South Burlington pilot project. It was \$5,913.13. Under expenses, the item #7700 "contracted park maintenance expenses" was added, and amount was \$2,928.30 for materials only at South Burlington project. Please see 12/31/2016 WVPD monthly budget report, as well as WVPD/South Burlington Work 2016 Summary. There was a motion to accept the reports, and it was passed unanimously.

L.L. Bean Contract: There will not be a snowshoe clinic this year, due to uncertain amounts of snowfall. There is a request to have fly fishing classes, on a fee per user basis. Nick is proposing to rewrite our agreement with L.L. Bean to make it more inclusive of other businesses that might want to use our parks for outdoor recreation classes. It would be marketed on our webpage, and possibly on FPF. Aaron recommended that we prioritize these offers to local community outdoor businesses first, rather than nationally-based ones. A motion was made to authorize Nick to create a generic agreement for business entities to use our parks for outdoor instruction consistent with our conservation mission. Additionally, that L.L. Bean's request under the current contract, but with a fee per user basis would be approved. The motions were seconded and passed unanimously.

EAHM Operations Agreement: The existing agreement between WVPD and EAHM is

expiring. Nick recommended we extend the current agreement to the end of this fiscal year, June 30, 2017, to give us time to review and discuss it. Board members will review the 2013 agreement before next meeting, and discuss it then. We will need to keep in mind that the current entrance building will require renovation within the next 10 years. Dave moved that the board authorize the existing agreement through June 30, 2017. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Review of Agreement with City of South Burlington for Natural Area Maintenance and Project Management Services: Please see current agreement, dated Oct 18, 2016. A meeting between our staff and Tom Hubbard, Maggie Leugars, and Andrew Noonan of South Burlington indicated that they are very pleased with the bridge project at Wheeler Park, and they want to extend the contract to June 30, 2018. The current contract, for time and materials, can be canceled by either party with 15 days' notice. Nick stated that the current contract functions well, but would need to be further developed if it is for a longer time-frame. Tom asked if there were any indications from the general public whether the Wheeler Park project was a success. Lauren stated that the South Burlington Parks and Rec Facebook page had posted some appreciative comments. Tom and Aaron stated that feedback from the general public should be particularly valued in measuring success of a project. Other towns may be interested in future of availing themselves of this service, but board members are very concerned that a clear delineation of this type of project be made, separate from our existing contracts with each town. Several board members stated that our priority must always be to maintain our current commitments, before extending our services. Aaron questioned whether the work done during the "shoulder season" is an appropriate use of our personnel, and whether member towns may perceive this as short-changing their access over the full 12 months. However, the personnel are hired for this project during a time that ordinarily they would not be available for our service, and paid on time and materials basis. Sonja asked how this type of project is actually differentiated from our existing long-term contract service. Nick stated that the South Burlington project is for specific physical maintenance tasks to preserve natural areas. This contrasts with our mentoring service to our contract towns, where we participate primarily in the planning and organization work for conservation needs. Sonja stated our first priority must still be the service to the long-term contracted towns. Susan moved that the South Burlington contract be extended to December 31, 2017 only, in order to give us a full year of data, to assist our long-range planning for overall WVPD goals and services. The motion was seconded. It was passed by 5 members, with one nay vote.

Update on Colchester property conservation: The Wolcott Family Natural Area is being developed for recreational trails, but multiple steps are required, including archeology assessment and wetland determination. Further information about this will be provided by Tim Larned this month. Nick asks if the Colchester Conservation Commission would like to visit Walcott and other properties being conserved? Susan will discuss with them. The Fitzgerald property is also being conserved, with the goal for the Fitzgerald's to continue their dairy operation, but relocate it.

Directors Update: Please see report by Nick Warner to Board of Trustees, dated January 10, 2017. Also, Nick reported on the meeting with Williston Selectboard January 3. The Williston Conservation Commission had unanimously voted to continue membership in WVPD, and

Melinda Scott reported this to the Selectboard, in preparation for their voting January 17. However, on January 13, Rick McGuire, town manager, sent a letter recommending that the Selectboard vote to hold a town-wide vote on March 2018 to withdraw from membership in the district, only if there was no affirmative action by WVPD to change the way funding is distributed to its members. If the town voted to withdraw, there would still be another year to prepare for that event.

Adjournment: It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 PM, and this was passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: February 21, 2017 at 4:30 PM.