



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead
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Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Meeting

May 23, 2017

The meeting began at 4:30 PM

Present: David Crawford (South Burlington), Tom Malinowski (Essex), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Nick Warner (Executive Director), Rita Dessau (Williston), Aaron Keech (Burlington) Lauren Chicote (Programs Director), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester).

Minutes: A correction of April 18 minutes was recommended by Aaron, and the revised version was accepted unanimously.

Public Comment Period: No members of general public were present.

Agenda changes: Nick suggested addition of request to expand Forest Preschool, to be added to agenda. The addition was accepted unanimously.

Financial Reports: Report from Ethan Allen Homestead will be made available by next meeting June 20. Financial report for WVPD from April 30, 2017 was reviewed and accepted unanimously.

Executive Session: At 4:45 PM, the board voted to meet in executive session to discuss a real estate matter. At 5:22, the board voted to end the executive session and return to remainder of agenda.

Forest Preschool Expansion: The preschool is interested in leasing the EAH classroom to expand their program, beginning in autumn 2018. Group members expressed desire to continue the beneficial relationship with the preschool, as long as it does not impinge on the other uses of the EAH. This would imply that the space be leased only for the school year; that the facility would still be available for SOLE camp, afterschool, and weekend programming by WVPD; that additional janitorial service would be hired; that changes in vehicle traffic patterns would be anticipated and adjusted. Board will gather information and prepare to give more specific inquiries and plans in future.

Catamount Family Center, Williston: The town of Williston will be creating a management plan for conversion of the Catamount Family Center to a property with some public access, as well as continued occupancy by McCullough homestead and other uses. Nick suggested possibility of WVPD owning and managing a specific trail corridor in the property, which would be a public hiking path. Rita has volunteered to be on the town committee to discuss various options.

Survey Research Proposal and High Meadows grant: High Meadows no longer has enough time to begin preparing for survey of general public opinion of the parks in order to inform the

long-range planning process. Nick recommends that a professional polling group such as Castleton be employed for preparing the survey. We need to re-engage our constituents to identify how to serve them best, and how this service should be funded. A High Meadows grant could still be sought in order to research possible financial /organizational models for future planning, and then give consultation and facilitation based on that information. This would also require facilitation of presentations to the Park District's member towns, in Autumn 2017. Susan moved that Nick be authorized to spend up to \$7,000 from either reserve or operating expenses to engage Castleton Polling Institute as well as to engage other consultant(s) for long-range planning. The consultation would be sought both to identify possible funding models based on the information provided by the survey from Castleton (and any other research), as well as facilitation of presenting these issues to district members. Susan stated that we would need to be prepared, in advance, to present the information very clearly in meetings with member communities to facilitate optimal decision-making. Aaron stated that preservation of focus on ecological conservation should be the core aim of this endeavor. Sonja suggested that Nick utilize the principles developed by Gund Institute of UVM in order to prepare his RFP submission. Susan's motion to authorize Nick to spend up to \$7,000 for Castleton Polling Institute Survey, as well as procuring consultation and facilitation services for long-range planning, was seconded and was passed unanimously by all members.

Director's Updates: Please see May 18 report from Nick Warner to WVPD Board re activities since previous meeting. Highlights included: renovation of the bridge to Macrae Farm; Woodside Park boardwalks; work done at EAHM by Keurig volunteers; Conservation Field Day successful attendance by 350 children; permits obtained by Tim for Wolcott Farm work with YCC groups.

Adjournment: It was moved and passed unanimously, to adjourn at 6:20 PM.

Next meeting: June 20, 2017

Respectfully prepared by,

Rita Dessau, Secretary