



# Winooski Valley Park District

**Ethan Allen Homestead**

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## **Minutes for December 6th, 2021, Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District**

The meeting began at 4:33 PM. Meeting was held virtually via Zoom with Nick Warner in person at WVPD offices at the Ethan Allen Homestead in Burlington, VT.

**Present (via Zoom):** Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Erin Dupuis (Winooski), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), David Crawford (South Burlington), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager), Tim Larned (WVPD Parks Superintendent)

**Absent:** Aaron Keech (Burlington), Jeffery Theis (Essex)

**Guests:** Reid Willis (prospective Williston representative)

**Public Comment Period:** Nick present at parks district office. None present at time of public comment.

**Agenda Changes:** One change, remove “approve” from agenda item #4. Financial reports only are needed to be reviewed, not approved.

**Review and Approve Minutes from previous meeting:** No changes. Motion to approve by David Crawford, Seconded by Susan Gilfillan. Minutes unanimously approved.

**Review Financial reports:** David Crawford has reviewed the warrants. Lauren Chicote presented the WVPD financial report; she states we are halfway through the fiscal year, and the budget remains on track. The district has received a few year-end donations. Most towns paid their allocations. Burlington is outstanding but historically they pay in December. One large expense will be coming soon; filling in potholes at Macrae Farm Park, one quote has been obtained for \$4k, other quotes being obtained. She is hopeful to be making up for this expense with grants. EAHM Financials; Lauren presented Oct. and Nov. financials. Numbers look on par with past years and they have had a successful year overall. Bank accounts remain healthy. Reviewed an additional document that states commitments still to be paid which includes rent and utilities due to WVPD.

**Discuss FY2023 town budget process:** Nick Warner discussed that for FY2023 there will be a 6% increase in ask from towns. Colchester and South Burlington questioned the increase. Nick Warner spoke with both town/city managers respectively and feels confident they will be on board with the increase in the end. There are many changes and challenges with municipalities such as increase of property values and appealing of reappraisals, the Essex town/village split and leadership changes. Winooski increased their payment to \$7k for FY2022 (less than full allocation but up from years past). Nick is feeling positive going into next fiscal year. Dave Crawford asked if Nick has set up a meeting with the South Burlington manager yet, Nick said that will happen but hasn't been set as of yet. Sonja Schuyler asked Nick about Essex split, Nick explained that once the split is approved by legislature, it takes another fiscal year for changes to be made. Susan Gilfillan stated that when Essex joined, they were always Essex town, then asked if we expect push back from the Village? Nick Warner responded that through his conversations with the town, that the town plans to make it clear to the Village that there is some responsibility

to continue with this commitment. Dave Crawford noted that he has heard that the situation is a bit chaotic and there may be some objections to how this split happens. Board spoke of inviting the town manager to a meeting. Susan Gilfillan disclosed that she can't participate if Essex manager comes as they (town of Essex) are her clients.

**Updates/discussion on Museum renovation:** Nick Warner will be interviewing consultants and architects Monday December 13th. Bob Duncan will be assisting with the permitting process. Still waiting for grant contract and monies. The Board will be presented and will review the designs before finalized. Nick will fill board in with details as they come in, he expects more updates around the end of January 2022. Nick predicts that construction will start at the end of summer 2022.

**Updates on Derway /Jacob properties:** WVPD closed on the Derway property on Dec. 9th, 2021, there was a \$185k loan from VHCB which will be converted to a grant. Jacob Parcel-Trinity Baptist is doing the housing development and WVPD access will be created through that project. We are expecting about a 5-6 car parking lot for the trailhead. More to be reported early 2022. Susan Gilfillan congratulates Nick Warner and Tim Larned on their work on Derway.

**Discussion with Parks Superintendent Tim Larned:** Tim Larned gave a recap about Oct/Nov. park work; he stated this had been the hardest season to get crew members. They have also been adjusting to the loss of Remy, they had one returning crew member, Dave, and in the long run ended up being a very strong crew. There have been some car break ins at the Homestead and Colchester Pond, disappointing and they have decided to add signage to assist with this issue. Colchester Pond added a new pressure tank for the well and upgraded windows at the caretaker house. Derway- Spring project, install kiosk and signage. Wolcott- Ready to open in spring. Photos were shown of fencing, gate, signage and kiosk. Still searching for gate tenders for Wolcott and Derway. Photos shown of stairs at Salmon Hole to be replaced next summer with Vermont Recreation Trails Grant to support materials and VYCC crew to help with construction. Photos shown of loop trail at Colchester Pond, expecting grant monies for materials and labor for trail restoration. Plans to beef up bridges at Woodside and Muddy Brook. Photos shown of contracted work at non WVPD land. Sonja Schuyler stated that the park benches are looking shabby at Old Mill. Tim- Hoping update/paint, part of constant upkeep. Nick- If VOREC grant is given it will be for rebuilding wetlands walk at Homestead.

**Anticipated Executive Session:** Reid signs off. David Crawford proposed to move into executive session for purposes of real estate matters which premature disclosure would disadvantage the Park District. Erin Dupuis seconds. The Board entered Executive Session at 5:35pm. Susan Gilfillan moved to leave executive session; David Crawford seconded. Executive session ended at 5:46 PM.

**Adjourn:** 5:48 PM

**Next Meeting:** The date for the next meeting will be January 18th, 2022, at 4:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

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Erin Dupuis, WVPD Board Secretary