



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for August 18, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting for Winooski Valley Park District

The meeting began at 4:35PM. Meeting was held via conference video call (Zoom) due to the current situation regarding the coronavirus, COVID-19. WVPD offices are closed until further notice.

Present via conference call: Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), David Crawford (South Burlington), John Nittler (Williston), Erin Dupuis (Winooski), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Programs Director). **Guests:** Jeff Thais, potential new Essex Trustee (pending approval by Essex Select Board).

Absent: Aaron Keech (Burlington), “To be Named” Essex Trustee.

Public Comment Period: No public was present at the time; however, Jeff Thais attended the meeting as a guest pending approval by Essex Select Board as new Essex Representative to the WVPD Board of Trustees. Approval was being discussed at the select board meeting later that evening. The Board and WVPD staff all introduced themselves to Jeff.

Agenda Changes: No changes were made to the agenda.

Review and Approve minutes from July 21, 2020 board meeting: Minutes from the July meeting were approved and accepted unanimously.

Financial Reports for WVPD/Ethan Allen Homestead Museum: WVPD presented the financial report for month of July 2020, first month in the new fiscal year, FY21. A deficit of \$29,318.27 was reported, as WVPD has not received any member town allocations or other income for the new fiscal year yet – member town payments are expected to be received later this year and early next year. The WVPD sold two of its older vehicles, therefore receiving more in the General Income line item than originally budgeted. Susan asked a question about the report stating bank accounts have only been reconciled through the end of May – this is from an error with the WVPD bank and not receiving bank statements for the months of June and July. Lauren has contacted the bank and will be receiving reprinted statements for the missing months. The error was that the WVPD’s address had been deleted in the banks system; that error has been corrected.

The Treasurers report from the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum for the month of July was presented to the board for review.

Updates/discussion on Budget, Derway Cove, Jacobs Property, Forest Preschool and COVID-19 Building upgrades:

Budget: Nick gave a brief update on conversations with member town officials on town budgets and WVPD's allocations. While much is still unknown and each town's situation is different, many towns are now collecting tax revenue, and more information on budgets will be known in the fall.

WVPD plans to present the draft FY22 budget at next meeting. WVPD may seek approval for changes to current FY21 budget as situations regarding programs (cancellation of S.O.L.E. Camp and other education programs) has changed since budget was approved back in 2019.

Derway Cove: WVPD has received an extension through November 1st with the Vermont Community Fund grant for park restoration. Restoration is currently underway, with the access road and parking area being graded recently, more trees are to be planted, signage will be added, and a canoe/kayak launch installed. WVPD is working with project partner, Lake Champlain Land Trust, to put together the easement for the property, which will fulfill the VHCB grant obligations for the project. Reimbursement from FEMA for removing the buildings has been submitted.

Jacobs Property: Conversations with the Baptist Church continue in regards to parking and access through the Church's property to the Jacobs Property. The Church is very supportive of working with the Park District and the Town in allowing access, and is reviewing different options for an agreement. The board expressed concerns that securing agreement for access should be in place before taking ownership of the property.

COVID-19 Building Upgrades & Forest Preschool: There is an issue with zoning in regards to the expansion of the Forest Preschool. Current zoning capped enrollment at 20 students, which the program is already at. WVPD is working closely with City of Burlington Planning and Zoning to resolve and is starting the process to make an amendment to the zoning permit – however, this could take up to 6 months to get approval. Since the expansion is in response to COVID-19 and the need for childcare, WVPD is working with the City to get permission for the preschool to operate until the official process had been completed.

Nick has been researching and working with contractors to get information on upgrades to the ventilation system that would improve air quality/exchange in the Ethan Allen Homestead Education Center building (referred to as the Education Center) as a way to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the building. Upgrades would include better air circulation, UV light installment, and HEPA filter installment. These upgrades are important for the Forest Preschool and Ethan Allen Homestead Museum to be able to operate in the same building during the winter months. Other building improvements would be in the WVPD office building for the expanded Preschool space (back office) and would include installation of a new Rinnai heater, and insulation upgrades. The board expressed concerns that with the issues around zoning, WVPD could be spending a significant amount of money on these upgrades that may not get recouped/reimbursed from the tenants, due to zoning not getting approved. WVPD will be seeking grant and other sources to fund the upgrades, and will keep the board updated on the

progress of both the zoning and information on my expenses for upgrades.

Discussion on structure of Alnôbaiwi tenancy agreement: Nick sought guidance from the board on what the agreement with the Alnôbaiwi should be – a lease, license, easement, etc. Nick has also reached out to WVPD attorney for guidance as well. Susan expressed that before the Board can make suggestions, they need to have examples of the different options for an agreement. The Board also expressed that the agreement needs to include: insurance and liability coverage, mutual bail out clauses for both sides, the area under consideration needs to be defined and maintenance requirements/responsibility need to be decided, and what the use of the space will be. Nick will continue to work with WVPD’s attorney, and Fred Wiseman on the agreement, and will present bullets or a draft at the next meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:58PM.

Next Meeting: The date for the next meeting will be September 15, 2020 at 4:30 PM via Zoom.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Lauren Chicote, Programs Director