

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST  
REGULAR MEETING  
November 10, 2015

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on November 10, 2015 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Mitchell, Russell K. Gross, Gene Cavaliere, Rebecca Schultz, Roy Najecki, Janine Pitocco and legal counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: Steven St. Pierre

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests:

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Open Forum Agenda Items Only:** No one present wished to speak at this time.

**Approval of minutes of previous meetings**

- a. Russell K. Gross made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2015 meeting; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously with Rebecca Schultz and Janine Pitocco abstaining.

Recording clerk Judi Rix asked that it be entered into the minutes that at the last meeting of the Land Trust on October 13<sup>th</sup>, the disc ran out of room for recording and the entire meeting was not captured digitally. Ms. Rix did notify the Town Clerk's office that the last recording was not a complete one and that the discs were full, and was advised to erase what was on them and re-use the same discs. Ms. Rix did confirm with the clerk that they had all copies of the meetings before erasing any files. Russell K. Gross made a motion to adopt this request into the record of the meeting; Janine Pitocco seconded and it passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Roy Najecki presented the trustees with a spreadsheet with a suggested 2016 budget and the actuals as of October 13, 2015. Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Najecki also learned of an account through the finance office that involved \$14,339.73 in WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Project) funds set up by the town from a grant; Stephen Mitchell did locate a folder regarding these funds in the GLT files. Ten years ago the Land Trust received a grant from the Department of Agriculture and RCS to clear the top of Steere Hill, put in the field that is there now and do other work. The contract to do the work expired and no funds have been touched in years. Account should be closed and funds moved to the GLT unrestricted funds (ZZ) account.

**Approval of Bills**

- a. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay the recording clerk Judi Rix \$145 for the October 13, 2015 meeting minutes as well as the additional \$11.09 FICA charge to the town; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay John Bevilacqua's October 2015 invoice for \$1,000; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously.
- c. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay RI / DOT invoice of \$150 payable to General Treasurer of Rhode Island for regulatory applicability application fee for Joe Sweet Property; Roy Najecki seconded and it passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

- a. Joe Sweet Trailhead Grant Roy Najecki provided all the required information regarding the trailhead area and the board is still waiting to see if ok to cut trees after the 11/1 date. Should receive a formal letter from the D.O.T. in the next couple of weeks advising the board if they can move forward with the project or not.

- b. Signage to alert visitors to presence of wild animals: Steven Mitchell will prepare a draft of what the signs will say and send to John Bevilacqua to ensure that they have the appropriate wording.
- c. Approval of Sprague Farm Town Forest Management Plan Revision: Stephen Mitchell sent this to Lisa Primiano at the D.E.M. for review and followed up with her over a week ago to notify her of tonight's vote. If nothing was heard from her, it was going to proceed for approval/adoption. Since Ms. Primiano never reached out to the GLT, the vote is going forward. Russell K. Gross made a motion to formally adopt the Sprague Farm Town Management plan as presented; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously. The document will have the date of adoption on the last page and it will be put on the GLT website. Roy Najecki, Rebecca Schultz and Stephen Mitchell will set dates to begin work on the Steere Hill plan next.
- d. PayPal status: The board received an email from PayPal that the account has been closed and they will forward the balance of funds to the GLT in the form of a check.
- e. Location for Storage Shed/Building for GLT Equipment: Roy Najecki made a motion to table this for a future meeting; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously.
- f. Leash requirements for dogs: Steven St. Pierre and John Bevilacqua worked on this, and Stephen Mitchell read the new policy/rules for pets while on GLT properties. Regular or electronic leashes, no longer than 10 feet in length must be used on the cat or dog while on the property; dogs must also have a collar and valid license tags on as well. The pet owner is also responsible for all animal waste disposal. Roy Najecki made a motion to adopt the new rule with the amendment to allow horses as pets; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed with all in favor except Russell K. Gross who was opposed.
- g. Replacement of stolen equipment from Hawkins Garage: Stephen Mitchell spoke to the trust, and they do not believe that the replacement costs would meet the \$1,000 deductible. They advised Mr. Mitchell to keep all the receipts, and any amount over \$1,000 they will reimburse the board. Roy Najecki would like to draft a grant application to get funds for equipment to be replaced. Chairman Mitchell will place this on the next meeting in December's agenda.

## **New Business**

- a. Tracking volunteer hours on GLT properties: Steven St. Pierre has already begun this process and created a spreadsheet to keep track. Chairman Mitchell emphasized how important it is to keep track of all the hours given to the board and the town for this work; in the short time of being tracked so far, 75 hours have been logged in. Get the hours to Steven St. Pierre and he will get them into the log.
- b. Lynn Trocki, consultant, proposal to develop Baseline Documentation Report: Stephen Mitchell received a proposal from consultant Carol Lynn Trocki to help develop the required baseline documentation for the Dahlquist easement. After many hours of searching, Stephen Mitchell was able to locate the original Dahlquist file, and in it was the original stewardship cover letter. Ms. Trocki's fee to develop the needed documentation for the easement is \$1,760. Ms. Trocki and Mr. Dahlquist have a meeting scheduled to walk the property tomorrow, and members of the board are welcome to join them. Russell K. Gross believes the USDA should pay for half of the fee because they failed in their responsibilities on this easement as well and he is tired of having to correct errors of previous boards and its leadership; unfortunately the USDA does not see it that way and feels it is the full responsibility of the Land Trust. Mr. Mitchell would like to pay for it and put the entire issue in the past. Roy Najecki made a motion to approve the \$1,760 fee for Ms. Carol Lynn Trocki to create the required baseline documentation report for the Dahlquist easement; Janine Pitocco seconded and it passed with all in favor except Russell K. Gross who was opposed.
- c. Parental Consent Approval Form: Rebecca Schultz will get a draft to John Bevilacqua for review, he can modify the adult consent form the board currently has. Roy Najecki thinks that the adult form may already have a section for parental consent, so John Bevilacqua is going to look into that.
- d. Trail Grant to print brochures for GLT properties: Roy Najecki would like to request that Chairman Mitchell submit grant requests to D.E.M.'s Trail Grant Committee for printing 2500 trail maps for Steere Hill (\$642.99) and 1000 trail maps for Sprague Farm (\$442.99). Mr. Najecki has already sent all of the needed information to Mr. Mitchell, but required the board's approval to proceed with submitting them. Russell K. Gross made a motion to allow Stephen Mitchell to submit the grant requests to the D.E.M. for printing brochures for GLT properties; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously.

- e. Mini-Grant to purchase 5" by 5" signs identifying GLT properties: Roy Najecki believes it will help with encroachment issues by posting the 5x5 signs. This will not allow people to say they didn't know it was GLT property. Gene Cavaliere made a motion for Roy Najecki to pursue the costs associated with getting the signs created and to bring that information back to the next meeting; Janine Pitocco seconded and it passed unanimously.
- f. Request that Town Council abandon Elbow Rock Road: Elbow Rock Road is a town road that is not maintained, and people go up there and dump things. Roy Najecki would like to involve the GLT's town council liaison and see if he can help to get the town council to agree to abandon the road; this would allow the GLT to put up gates that would keep people from dumping things there. Chairman Mitchell will reach out to the GLT liaison Steve Sette and report back to the board at the next meeting.
- g. Youth Leadership activity on Steere Hill for November 28, 2015: Rebecca Schultz would like to hold another event at Steere Hill with the council. She is working with the Norman Bird Sanctuary to present a barred owl program at the Harmony Library, followed by a walk at Steere Hill and ending with another campfire. The students think this would be a great opportunity to get some younger students involved with the council. There is a \$150 fee for the barred owl program and they have a 30 student limit. Due to the short window of time before the event, Mrs. Schultz will probably have to pay for the event and then submit a reimbursement request to the board. Roy Najecki made a motion to allow the event to take place on the 28th; seconded by Gene Cavaliere and it passed unanimously.
- h. Sprague Farm encroachment: Roy Najecki presented pictures to the board of where a logging company had cut a bypass of about 150 feet on GLT property to avoid a rutted portion of Joe Sweet Road. John Bevilacqua will send both the landowner and the logging company a cease and desist letter after Mr. Najecki gets him all of the information on the parties involved.
- i. 2015-2016 Budget proposal and adoption: Roy Najecki made a motion to table the approval of the budget for FY2016 to a future workshop meeting; it was seconded by Rebecca Schultz and passed unanimously. Roy Najecki then made a motion to schedule the workshop meeting for November 24<sup>th</sup> at 7pm to approve the budget and pay bills; Janine Pitocco seconded and it passed unanimously.

## Correspondence

a. Scituate Reservoir Project: Gregg Cassidy (10/19/15) of D.E.M. sent a letter to the board requesting support of the Forest Legacy Program in RI; this program will allow applications to be submitted to fund conservation easement purchases in the towns of Scituate, Foster and Glocester. Project consists of about ten tracks of land in the vicinity of the Scituate Reservoir, and will be protected under the USDA. Roy Najecki made a motion for the GLT Chairman Stephen Mitchell to send a letter of support for the Forest Legacy Program in RI; it was seconded by Russell K. Gross and passed unanimously.

b. Planting a tree: Denise Davis (10/27/15) sent a request to the board to plant a tree up at Steere Hill in memory of a family member who recently passed away and loved to hike to the top of Steere Hill. The board is trying very hard to control the planting of trees at the top of the hill and would rather not have any more planted at this time. Chairman Mitchell will respond to Ms. Davis and suggest maybe putting a bench up there with a plaque on it with the name of their relative. People would enjoy having another bench up there to sit on.

c. Rupert Friday – November 7<sup>th</sup> Organizing Land Trust Records Workshop: Stephen Mitchell found the workshop very helpful and brought back a handout to share with the other members of the board. The board will need to create a records policy, and this handout will be especially helpful when the trustees start to decide which records they are going to keep and which ones they feel they can discard. Rebecca Schultz believes that right now, all of the stuff in the records is overwhelming. The only downside to the workshop was the delay in starting due to the late arrival of other attendees; Mr. Mitchell shared his thoughts on that with Mr. Friday.

d. Leslie Hyde – Colwell Property: Stephen Mitchell received a communication from Mr. Hyde, and immediately forwarded it to John Bevilacqua. It is the policy of the board that no individual trustee can communicate with anyone involved in a possible real estate transaction, and all communication must go through the GLT legal counsel and to the board as an entire group. Mr. Bevilacqua did remind Mr. Hyde of this rule so as to avoid any confusion going forward. Mr. Hyde notified Mr. Bevilacqua that he has hired an attorney and future communication from him will come from his attorney. The board will wait to hear from them.

**Trail Inspections:** Nothing to report on.

**Monthly GLT Activities – Reports:** Nothing to report on.

**Open Forum** Janine Pitocco wanted to say that she is pleased to be on the board, and looks forward to working with everyone. Mrs. Pitocco also wanted the trustees to be aware that each year FM Global employees are paid 8 hours by the company to do volunteer work; so she would probably be able to get a few volunteers together for any GLT projects that may need them. Rebecca Schultz would like to invite the Historical Society to a future meeting to discuss the various GLT historical buildings. Rebecca Schultz and Janine Pitocco will work together to oversee the Hawkins property going forward; this property does have a historical building on it.

**Executive Session:** There was no need for an executive session tonight.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Russell K. Gross made a motion to adjourn at 8:41 p.m. The motion was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and it passed unanimously.

APPROVED AT NOVEMBER 24, 2015 MEETING.