

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST
REGULAR MEETING
August 11, 2015

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on August 11, 2015 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Mitchell, George Charette, Gene Cavaliere, Roy Najecki, Rebecca Schultz and legal counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: Steven St. Pierre and Russell K. Gross

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: Mr. David Lee, Mrs. Lyn Lee, Youth Leadership Council members: David Lee, Tye Donaldson, Francesca Lupini and James Farias

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of minutes of previous meetings

- a. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 9, 2015 meeting; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Roy Najecki has not received an updated report since June, so he asked this item be tabled until the September meeting. Stephen Mitchell will contact the finance office regarding the timeliness in issuance of a report.

Approval of Bills

- a. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay the recording clerk Judi Rix \$145 for the June 9, 2015 meeting minutes as well as the additional \$11.09 FICA charge to the town; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. George Charette made a motion to pay John Bevilacqua's June 2015 invoice for \$1,000; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed unanimously.
- c. Roy Najecki made a motion to pay the Interlocal Trust Annual Premium invoice for \$3,684.00 for the annual property & liability insurance coverage; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Roy Najecki made a motion to go out of order on the agenda to accommodate the guests present, and move item "B" under New Business to the next official item to be discussed; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Land Trust Youth Leadership Council activities and recognition: Rebecca Schultz wanted to acknowledge David Lee for his contributions to the Youth Leadership Council; he was very helpful with all aspects of the program and went out of his way to ensure its success. David was presented with two certificates for outstanding service and for furthering the mission of the Gloucester Land Trust Youth Leadership council. Rebecca Schultz also wanted to thank Mrs. Lee for all of her assistance with the Council as well.

The other three Youth Council members present shared their thoughts and experiences regarding their involvement with the group. Tye Donaldson enjoyed making the native plant clippings, learning the history behind Steere Hill and taking an inventory on the Steere Hill reptile and amphibian population. James Farias focused more on what he looks forward to doing with the group, they would like to organize a dog walk, kayak trip, stargazing event, possible campfire on Steere Hill, conduct more trail inspections and maybe even field

trips for younger students to share what they have learned. Francesca Lupini has learned about the Land Trust and what it does and has come to appreciate walking in nature. Two other student not present (Sabrina and Allison) are working on a display for the Gloucester Library. Stephen Mitchell thanked them all for taking an interest in the Land Trust and for helping to further the GLT mission.

Roy Najecki made a motion to go out of order on the agenda since Mr. Farias was present, and move item “A” under Trail Inspections to the next official item to be discussed; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Trail Inspections

Trail Inspection Report: Student James Farias submitted a trail inspection report from Sprague Farm, and he noted the following items: culvert conditions need repair, old lumber at end of trail needs to be picked up and there were some dead trees along the trail that should be addressed. Roy Najecki indicated overall it was a good trail report and that the stated trees have been identified and marked with orange spray paint.

Old Business

- a. Colwell Property: Stephen Mitchell provided a copy of the aerial view photo from the state for the trustees to see at the meeting. John Bevilacqua has not heard anything from the landowners, and will contact them to see what their status is. The Land Trust has provided them with all the information they need to make a decision and it is up to them as to how they wish to proceed at this point.
- b. Steere Hill -- Reopening of Trails: D.E.M. biologist Charlie Brown walked the trails with Steven St. Pierre to see if coyotes were still on the property. Mr. Brown recommended the following: erect a permanent sign stating wildlife on the premises, dogs should be leashed so they don't chase wildlife (at least for some months), remind people not to leave food behind and post a phone number to call to report encounters. Stephen Mitchell would like to reopen the trails and can address any further issues when they come up. Roy Najecki made a motion to reopen the closed trails at Steere Hill; George Charette seconded and it passed unanimously.
- c. Steere Hill -- Parking Lot: The engineer provided the board with a diagram for the new parking area at Steere Hill. All required paperwork for the D.O.T. is being completed and will be provided to the trustees for review at the GLT September meeting. The new parking area will accommodate approximately 50 cars.
- d. Revision of Volunteer Application: Steven St. Pierre had submitted the revised volunteer application for approval. John Bevilacqua reviewed the document and indicated it was good to go. Roy Najecki made a motion to adopt the revised volunteer application; George Charette seconded and it passed unanimously.

New Business

- a. Sprague Farm Town Forest – Management Plan Revision: Stephen Mitchell, Rebecca Schultz and Roy Najecki have held three meetings in person and one electronically to work on this. This is the first management plan that has been revised in over 25 years; they are supposed to be looked at/revised every 5 years. Roy Najecki has a software program that has provided an immense amount of detail to the management plan that was never provided before, along with the information from a Bio blitz. A copy of what has been compiled so far was sent to all of the trustees, the legal counsel and the recording clerk. Stephen Mitchell would like to hold a special workshop next week to specifically address this. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to convene the workshop next Tuesday, August 18th at 7pm in Town Hall; Gene Cavaliere seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. Hawkins Garage: Stephen Mitchell received word at the end of June that the door to the garage was wide open. When Mr. Mitchell went to check on the property, it was discovered that people had entered the garage through a window and took some of the GLT equipment that was being stored there. Roy Najecki had an inventory of what was there and was able to provide the police a list of what was taken to go along with the police report. Within a week the thieves had returned, so the

remaining equipment was moved before it could be stolen. The board has a \$1,000 deductible, so the equipment may not be covered. Hawkins Garage is a historic building in Glocester because at one time it was the post office and then a store.

- c. Review and update of Strategic Plan: Stephen Mitchell gave a presentation of the GLT long and short term goals. The board has moved forward on many items, like the establishment of a Youth Council; and also put a hold on others, like the national accreditation. Mr. Mitchell will provide another update in approximately 3-4 months.

Correspondence

- a. Joe Sweet Parking Lot: The trustees have been in touch with Steve Church of the D.O.T. regarding building a small parking area up there to accommodate 8-10 cars. The GLT does not believe it is encroaching on any wetlands, so an Insignificant Alteration form filed with the D.E.M. should be sufficient. Mr. Church asked if any trees larger than 3" in diameter would be taken down to achieve this; this question pertained to the habitat of a rare species of bat that has been recorded in RI. Stephen Mitchell does not foresee any trees being removed along either road leading to the parking area.
- b. GLT Accounts: Diane Brennan discovered that Bank of America was charging over \$500 to town accounts for a service fee. Stephen Mitchell authorized her to do what was necessary to avoid paying such an extravagant fee. Ms. Brennan did take action and moved the town accounts to Citizen's Bank; the GLT account was one of those accounts. Neither Roy Najecki nor Stephen Mitchell has heard from Ms. Brennan recently.
- c. Forest Legacy Program: Greg Cassidy of D.E.M. mentioned they will be providing grants linked to good forest stewardship. An informational workshop will be held later in August, but nothing official has been released yet.

Monthly GLT Activities – Reports: Roy Najecki wanted to let the board know about the two Land Trust Days events he has planned. Rebecca Schultz suggested getting the youth council there to help, and Mr. Najecki loved that idea. There are two loop walks planned, with the first walk at Steere Hill on September 5th at 10am; the second will be at Sprague Farm on September 6th at 10am.

Open Forum Stephen Mitchell would like to put alternative revenue generation on the September agenda. The board has discussed in the past harvesting timber on GLT properties, but the process of how to go about doing that has never been talked about. Rebecca Schultz would like to add an item to next week's workshop agenda, so she will send Mr. Mitchell an email. Roy Najecki disclosed that the State of RI has entered into a purchase & sales agreement on 80 acres of land on Wooly Woodhead Road. The RI Land Trust Council recently put together the economic impact of open space; over the past two years there has been an increase to over 10,500 people that have visited the website looking for trail maps, with the majority of visitors from out of state. Steere Hill has been in the top 6 places to hike in RI for multiple years. When asked about outdoor activities, the public wants trails and bike paths.

George Charette announced that he will be stepping down from his position on the Glocester Land Trust board, this meeting will be his last. George was also the Planning Board's liaison to the Trust, so that will become vacant unless Russell K. Gross decides to assume that role within the Land Trust's board. If Mr. Gross does decide to become the liaison for the Planning Board, he will need to resign his current position on the GLT and then that term appointment will need to be filled by an appointment made by the Town Council.

Executive Session: Legal counsel John Bevilacqua indicated that there was no need for an Executive session this evening.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, George Charette made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and it passed unanimously. APPROVED AT AUGUST 18, 2015 MEETING.