

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST  
REGULAR MEETING  
May 10, 2022

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on May 10, 2022, at Gloucester Town Hall. Chairman Janine Pitocco called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Members in attendance: David DeCost, Kimberly Justham, Wil Morin, Roy Najecki and Janine Pitocco. Legal Counsel David Ursillo was also present.

Members Absent: Scott Boudreau, Gene Cavaliere

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: None

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Open Forum Agenda Items Only:** No guests present to speak.

**Approval of minutes of previous meetings** (discussions and /or action): Member Roy Najecki made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 12, 2022, meeting; it was seconded by Member Wil Morin and passed unanimously. VOTE: Ayes – 4 (Justham, Morin, Najecki, Pitocco) Member David DeCost abstained from the vote since he was not at that meeting.

**GLT Treasurer’s Report** (discussions and /or action): Treasurer Roy Najecki provided the Board with an updated report and petty cash update; there were no unusual items to report on. Member Najecki will be preparing the next fiscal year budget for discussion/review at the June meeting. The real estate transfer tax funds still have not been deposited into the GLT account as of this meeting.

**Approval of Bills**

- a. Member Roy Najecki made a motion to pay Judi Rix a total of \$175.00 for the May 10, 2022 minutes; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Wil Morin and passed unanimously VOTE: Ayes – 5 (DeCost, Justham, Morin, Najecki, Pitocco)
- b. Member Roy Najecki made a motion to pay Regional Restrooms, Inc. a total of \$707.70 for the portable restrooms at Steere Hill (\$245.90), Sprague Farm (\$230.90) and Hawkins Pond (230.90) for April 2022; it was seconded by Member Kimberly Justham and passed unanimously. VOTE: Ayes – 5 (DeCost, Justham, Morin, Najecki, Pitocco) The restrooms will be serviced every Friday.

**Old Business** (discussion and/or action)

- a. Organizing volunteer days for work on GLT properties: Chairman Janine Pitocco wanted to make sure everyone was on the same page. Former Member Bruce Payton was previously the coordinator of the GLT volunteers. While Mr. Payton is no longer on the Board, he is still an active volunteer. Member Roy Najecki and Mr. Payton try to get volunteers together on Wednesdays depending on the weather and volunteer availability. The volunteers on the email list have been vetted by the Board and consist of about 6-8 people; any of the trustees can organize a volunteer day. Chairman Pitocco would like anyone organizing a volunteer day to include the other Board members on that email in case they wish to participate. Chairman Pitocco would also like to have a list of projects volunteers could work on so the Board can get different tasks completed.

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- b. Clarkville Schoolhouse Repairs: The Board received a quote of \$7,571.00 from Catcon, LLC to make the repairs to the sill, window casings and a small portion of the siding. The Board now needs to decide if they are going to move forward with these repairs. Member Roy Najecki stated that the original quote was now almost six months old, so that may have expired, and the job could cost more. Legal Counsel David Ursillo suggested authorizing the amount to be spent to include a 20% increase to handle the possible increase in cost; the purchase would still meet the town's purchasing requirements and it wouldn't have to wait until the next meeting to be discussed again. If the increase is more than 20% then it would need to be re-evaluated and possibly go out to bid. Member Roy Najecki made a motion to award the contract to Catcon, LLC for \$7,571.00 with a contingency of 20% for the increased cost of materials. Upon receipt of an invoice from Catcon, LLC for an amount not to exceed \$9,999.00, and confirmation from the GLT chairperson or designee that all invoiced work is complete, the GLT Treasurer is authorized to submit a purchase requisition form to the Town Finance Dept for payment of the invoice. No further action or vote will be required of the GLT to have this invoice paid; it was seconded by Member Kimberly Justham and passed unanimously. VOTE: Ayes – 5 (DeCost, Justham, Morin, Najecki, Pitocco)
- c. Clarkville Schoolhouse Trail to WG Elementary: Member Roy Najecki provided a document that showed the existing and proposed trails. GLT volunteers went out to check out the area, but no work has been started. The property does not have a trustee property manager assigned to it yet, but maybe it is time to do that. There was once a quarry on it and there is a substantial stone wall in the middle of the property.
- d. Sprague Farm site visit discussion: David DeCost, Wil Morin, Gene Cavaliere, Roy Najecki and Janine Pitocco participated in the site visit and inspected the trails. Member Kimberly Justham went out there prior to the visit with her family and was able to see the Haystack Hill trail. Member Najecki believes fixing these trails is a high priority to ensure the safety of the public hiking the trails. Fixing them could involve a bridge or putting stone down, but either way it will involve getting permits. Member DeCost stated that because it is an existing right of way it may be easier to obtain those; need to reach out to DEM to see what options would be available.
- Vice Chairman Morin asked where this project fell on the list of priorities when thinking about finances, especially if the cost is high to make the repairs. Member DeCost said that two things to consider when deciding on how to proceed will be the permitting effort and the cost. Member Najecki would like to see the bridge put in place on the Col. Anthony trail first and then go back to the Haystack Hill trail as the second part of the repairs. Legal Counsel David Ursillo suggested that if the Board is going to engage an engineer for one part of the project, maybe they should engage them to do both projects at the same time. Former trustee Jim Giarrusso handled all the requirements for DEM, met with DEM when necessary and then built the bridges all on his own; he built and installed four bridges in a short period of time. Member Najecki and Member DeCost will work on concept for the bridge and bring it back to the Board for review. Member Najecki believes the biggest challenge will be determining the dimensions of the bridge to cover the required span.
- e. Sprague Farm parking lot: Chairman Janine Pitocco asked what the goal for the lot is. Member Najecki stated that the lot has been cleared, landscaping needs to be completed, the old "U" shape foundation will need to be filled in to become part of the parking area and some rocks need to be relocated; he is hoping the DPW may be able to assist with some of this. There is a stream on the side of the parking area and the Board needs to make sure all DEM setback requirements are met when planning work on the parking lot. Chairman Pitocco thinks more information needs to be gathered on what those requirements are prior to any work being done.

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- f. Mowing Contracts: The cost of mowing last year at Hawkins Pond was approximately \$2,900, at Steere Hill it was approximately \$9,000 and at Phillips Farm it was approximately \$3,600. Typically, do not mow between April 15<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup> to help preserve wildlife habitats. The exception to that is the slope of Hawkins Pond Dam; DEM requires that the slope be mowed on a regular basis and the Board hires a third party to do that. The trails get mowed, but that work is usually done by volunteers, not a third party. The Board can decide if they wish to mow the fields again this year. Member Najecki thinks the decision should be based on how the invasives are growing; if they are growing out of control then the field should be mowed, otherwise let them be. Chairman Pitocco will put this on the agenda again to discuss at a future meeting.
- g. Concrete Contracts: Member Roy Najecki completed the required DEM paperwork and is now waiting on a contract that will need to be signed and returned to get the Purchase Order number and allow the Board to begin spending the grant funds. Anything the Board submits for reimbursement against the grant funds must have been paid in prevailing wages. Member Najecki thinks the best route to take would be to get the concrete done at the Hawkins property first out of pocket and then use grant funds to get Steere Hill done. The quotes the Board received are from a year ago, so the jobs may need to go out to bid again. At the December meeting the Board awarded the contract to Baccala Concrete Corporation, so they need to be contacted to see if the quote is still valid. If it is still a valid quote, the Board needs to act on it. If the price has increased, then the Board can seek new quotes. Member DeCost suggested that when asking for new quotes, see if the quote can be valid for 90 days since it may take a little while to get the DEM PO information; it may cost a little more to do that, but it may prevent quotes from expiring before the Board can take action.

**New Business** (discussions and/or action):

- a. Hawkins Dam Repair Update: Chairman Janine Pitocco has not heard back from the engineer and hasn't had the opportunity to reach out to him again. The person who oversaw this project is no longer on the Board, so Chairman Pitocco asked if anyone would like to become the point person. Member David DeCost is willing to help on this but anticipates he will need some assistance; Member Roy Najecki offered to help where he can. The repair budget for this project was based on figures provided by former trustee Jim Giarrusso. Vice Chairman Wil Morin asked the Board if they were willing to lower the water level to alleviate some of the pressure on the dam, and they stated that they were willing to do that but the noted that the low-level valve that lowers the water is undersized and it takes a while for it to go down. Legal Counsel David Ursillo will follow up with Gerry Mosca on what he was supposed to do for the GLT regarding communications with both upstream and downstream constituents that would be impacted by the height of the water level.
- b. Hawkins Dam Pest Control: Member Scott Boudreau asked that this be put on the agenda, but he is not present tonight. Member Boudreau identified a couple of holes in the earthen dam that are probably groundhogs that would need to be removed. Chairman Pitocco did not see the quote Member Boudreau received, so this will have to be tabled for tonight.
- c. Property Managers: Chairman Janine Pitocco asked if anyone would be interested in taking on the following properties: Steere Hill and Clarkville Schoolhouse. Vice Chairman Wil Morin and Member Kimberly Justham volunteered to take Steere Hill. Member David DeCost already volunteered to be the point person for the Hawkins Dam project and volunteered to handle Clarkville Schoolhouse. Chairman Pitocco stated the schoolhouse is its own parcel of land, but she sees it as part of the Kwandrans property. The schoolhouse building is the priority on the property and eventually a decision needs to be made on what the building will be used for.

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D. Purchase of ATV for Sprague Farm: Chairman Janine Pitocco asked how often an ATV would be used at Sprague, and Member Roy Najecki stated that it would probably be used once a week. Member Najecki suggested moving the ATV from Steere Hill to Sprague temporarily to complete the necessary trail work at Sprague. He could swap the ATV with the Gator so there would still be transportation at Steere Hill. Chairman Pitocco thinks that since there is no urgent need to get the ATV to Sprague, it should stay at Steere Hill for now so the new property managers can see if they could get by with the Gator and evaluate what they currently have for equipment. If the two items do end up getting swapped out, they will need to find a way to move them since the GLT utility trailer is not registered. The Board also questions whether trustees can operate the tractor which is classified as requiring a hoisting license; an exemption to requiring the hoisting license is if you are a horticulturist. Member Najecki is a member of the Horticulturist Society, but it is not clear if he can operate it on property not owned by him or operate it in any type of commercial/ business setting. The item will be tabled until a future meeting.

**Correspondence:** Chairman Janine Pitocco received an email from a Mr. Matt Theriault who stated he tried to attend a meeting at Town Hall, but nobody was there when he arrived.

**Open Forum:** Chairman Janine Pitocco would like to meet for the second meeting on May 24<sup>th</sup>; Member Roy Najecki cannot attend that meeting because he will be working the polls for the town that day.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Member Roy Najecki made a motion to adjourn at 9:55pm.; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Wil Morin and passed unanimously. VOTE: Ayes – 5 (DeCost, Justham, Morin, Najecki, Pitocco)

**Minutes Approved:** June 14, 2022 meeting.