

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST
REGULAR MEETING
May 12, 2015

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on May 12, 2015 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

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

Members Absent: George Charette

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: Jessie Gross

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 April 14, 2015 meeting; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously with Steven St. Pierre abstaining due to his absence at that meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Roy Najecki stated that the financials for April have not come out yet, so he would like to table this until the next regular meeting. Russell K. Gross made a motion to table this discussion until the next regular meeting; it was seconded by Rebecca Schultz and passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills

- a. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay the recording clerk Judi Rix \$145 for the April 14, 2015 meeting minutes as well as the additional \$11.09 FICA charge to the town; Steven St. Pierre seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to pay John Bevilacqua's April 2015 invoice for \$1,000; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously.

Old Business

- a. Steere Hill Parking Lot Update: Stephen Mitchell wanted to determine if this needed to go out to bid, and he was told that it did not by the finance office. This was considered professional services similar to legal counsel and does not need to go out to bid. The board just needs to determine if the cost is fair, and if they want to move forward with Caputo and Wick. Roy Najecki made a motion to approve the proposed contract submitted by Caputo and Wick and to authorize Chairman Stephen Mitchell to sign the contract and move the project forward; it was seconded by Rebecca Schultz and passed unanimously.
- b. Trail Inspection Training Update: Steven St. Pierre recently held training for the GLT volunteers and four volunteers and trustee Russell K. Gross attended that training. One of those trainees has already submitted a trail inspection report. Mr. St. Pierre will conduct another class for anyone that missed the first one. The protocol will now include marking the issue on a trail map and submitting that with the report.

New Business

- a. RI Land Trust Council Grant Proposal: Roy Najecki provided information on a new initiative that the RI Land Trust Council is pursuing. The Land Trust is looking to submit a grant to purchase molds to make benches similar to those at Hawkins Pond. Any land trust interested in this can basically get benches for free, it would only require the labor to create the benches. The grant request includes the cost of the

materials for the benches. The GLT would be interested in starting with approximately six benches, and just needs to notify the Land Trust that they are interested and how many they would like. Russell K. Gross made a motion to notify the RI Land Trust that they are interested in participating in this grant request; Rebecca Schultz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- b. Dogs and Horses on Steere Hill Trails: The board has received complaints about people walking their dogs and not picking up after them. Rebecca Schultz suggested providing bags, but Stephen Mitchell was concerned those would just be left on the trails as well. Mr. Mitchell suggested putting up signs indicating that if you don't pick up after your dog, the trails may become closed to dogs in the future. Mrs. Schultz is concerned about the environmental impact of the waste being left behind and isn't crazy about dogs being off leash in general. She believes it is the rare dog that would be able to exhibit control if they caught the scent of a wild animal; maybe a leash law imposed on the trails would be a solution. Stephen Mitchell believes enforcement of these regulations would be an issue though. John Bevilacqua is more concerned about a loose dog attacking a person or a child. Stephen Mitchell asked John Bevilacqua to draft a proposal of a leash law for GLT properties that would require the dog be on either an electronic or physical leash, and have it for the trustees to review at the next regular meeting in June. In the meantime, Rebecca Schultz will look into disposal systems and the trustees will get signs made asking people to pick up after their dogs to post at the kiosk and on the trails.

Horses are an issue at Steere Hill due to the high use of the trails by pedestrians. The board is considering closing Steere Hill to horses and directing riders to the Sprague Farm property instead.

Sprague Farm is not used as heavily as Steere Hill. When updating the management plans for these two properties, these issues will need to be considered. John Bevilacqua also stated that by posting signs about equestrian use, that limits the GLT's liability according to RI law.

- c. Gate at Phillips Farm: Russell K. Gross reminded the board that this gate and its materials were purchased approximately two years ago and would like to see it finally get put up. Roy Najecki said that an auger was used to dig the post-holes already. Mr. Gross will contact Mr. Marshall (Contractor) to get the gate put up.
- d. Youth Volunteers and Liability Coverage: Rebecca Schultz has been meeting with seven members of the youth group, which consists of high school teens. The agricultural teacher and director are very interested in the program and the students have started doing cuttings from native plants. The members will come before the board for approval to do projects on GLT properties and Stephen Mitchell would like them to complete a volunteer application; the waiver portion would require getting the parent's permission. John Bevilacqua will draft a parental waiver and send it to Mrs. Schultz. Chairman Mitchell would also like to involve the Foster Land Trust in this initiative. The students have a list of activities they would like to participate in: kayak racing, dog walk fundraiser, planting & growing native plants, oral history presentations, star gazing, trail inspections, grade school field trips, library displays and brochures.
- e. Volunteer Application Form Revision: Steven St. Pierre revised and simplified the old form; felt it was too long and too many non-relevant questions based on feedback he has been receiving. Mr. St. Pierre left the information about coverage for volunteers and the waiver. The trustees can review the updated form and vote on it at next regular meeting.
- f. Coyote contacts on Steere Hill and Closing of certain trails: Steven St. Pierre had been told that a coyote on a Steere Hill trail had attacked/injured a couple of dogs. Stephen Mitchell was concerned that it could have been a person/child that was attacked. Mr. St. Pierre contacted the D.E. M. for advice and decided to close the west side of the property for safety reasons. Chairman Mitchell thinks the area needs to stay closed and legal counsel John Bevilacqua agreed and believes there is no other choice but to keep that part closed. Mr. Bevilacqua suggested that the trustees speak to the dog owner and to the vet who treated the animals, but all information has been second hand and nobody knows who the dog owner is. It is believed to be a mother coyote that is protecting her pups, so the trails on the west side will remain closed and the signs saying that will remain up. The board will re-evaluate in July when they believe the mother and pups will have moved on.

Correspondence

- a. Trail report: Steven St. Pierre sent an email to all of the trustees telling them of the changes he was making to the trail report.

Trail Inspections

- a. J. McGrath – Steere Hill (4/25/15): Roy Najecki has addressed the majority of issues on this report.

Monthly GLT Activities – Reports: There are currently no walks planned, but Roy Najecki went to a seminar in Exeter this past weekend regarding forestry issues. Mr. Najecki was advised to address forestry issues when creating/editing management plans on the property and before planning any harvesting on the property.

Open Forum Steven St. Pierre wanted to remind the board members that the website migration was happening this weekend, so it may not be available for a few hours. John Bevilacqua also wanted to let the trustees know that he had received the Class 1 survey from the Great Wall project.

Executive Session: Legal counsel John Bevilacqua indicated that there was no need for an Executive session this evening. There will be a special executive session meeting next week on Tuesday, May 19th at 7pm.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Russell K. Gross made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. The motion was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and it passed unanimously.

APPROVED AT MAY 19, 2015 MEETING.