

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2020

Attending:

Peter Carson, Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Dan Hager, Ray Jackson, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Rail removal project

We toured the rail corridor and landings on February 25 with Jeff Greene of JMG Metal Trading and Russ Clark of Keystone Rail Recovery. They are very interested in doing our rail removal job, most likely at no cost to us. Joan and Jeff Greene will be the contact people for this project.

Jeff phoned Joan on February 28 to say that Russ's crew is still in Portsmouth and they cannot start our project until the week of March 16 or 23. They want to start at the Townsend trailhead and work in the dry section to just beyond Sterilite. If they have time left to spare, they will move to the dry section at Crosswinds.

Pete Cunningham contacted Dave Paulson at NHESP, who said we can probably extend our construction time frame through the end of March.

Pete also contacted Groton DPW Director Tom Delaney, who said he would like the rails removed from the pavement at Crosswinds. He will need at least a few days of lead time to prepare for road reconstruction.

Jeff Greene and Russ Clark stated their commitment to return and finish the project in November. Bill noted that there will be an extra expense for wattles if we remove the rails across the entire corridor.

Dave Sears of Newport and Narragansett Bay Transportation expressed interest in removing the ties.

Sterilite fence installation

Sterilite moved their snow bank and Max13 started fence construction on March 6. They worked through the weekend and finished on the 10th. Bill said it came out nice and looks integrated well. Max13 is still interested in any other aspects of the project.

We need to purchase locks for two gates. A 2019 letter from Townsend Fire Chief recommended Knox padlocks. Bill will ask Rick Bailey to advise.

Bill is paying the third payment to Max13 from our Community Foundation fund. We approved his draft Facebook post expressing appreciation for Max13's work.

Tree removal project review

Gary Shepherd has been removing stumps over the entire area near his property, including the rail corridor. This saves us some time and expense, but it would have been nice to have at least a row of trees for shade and a visual barrier from Rt. 119. We discussed tree planting as a future project and agreed to keep a closer watch over future project activity.

Depot Street parking permit

Bill pointed out that we need a permit from the Planning Board for the parking area. He will ask Stan Dillis to get that started and inquire about leveling the berm alongside Depot Road.

He will also talk to Stan about initiating a Stormwater permit.

Canoe launch on Harbor Pond

Joan and Bill attended the Townsend Historical Society meeting on February 26 to present an idea for a canoe launch at the Harbor Church.

This idea came about as part of a canoe access subcommittee of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council.

The Historical Society is supportive, as long as canoe activity does not interfere with their activities. Also, they do not want signs installed.

Bill will present the idea to Gary Shepherd, who is leading the effort to rent the Harbor Church for a fire engine museum. Bill pointed out that parking is available on rail trail property.

Joan made a motion to support the Wild & Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council's use of rail trail property for a canoe launch on Harbor Pond. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Work day to clear out wattles

The board of directors will meet at Depot Street on Saturday, March 28 at 9:00 AM to begin clearing wattles. We scheduled a second work day for Sunday, April 5th at 9:00 AM to finish, if needed.

We will cut open wattles and scatter the straw, leaving the stakes in place as markers. The best tool might be a utility knife mounted to a stick.

Joan will call S&N Farms to find out if the netting is biodegradable.

Joan will send out an email reminder.

Spring volunteer day to clear trail

We scheduled a public clean-up day for May 2 at 9:00 AM. We will advertise the week before, at Earth Day.

We will break into teams and assign sections. We will leave stumps in place in the tread way. Outside of the tread way, we will cut stumps flush with brush cutters. We will throw brush and branches into the woods away from wetland areas. We might need wheelbarrows and loppers.

Trail walk with Townsend Historical Society

Bill contacted the society's President and Administrative Assistant to collaborate on a trail walk. They suggested Saturday, July 11, when they are doing tours of the Reed Homestead.

Townsend Earth Day

Mark signed us up for a table on April 25 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This year is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

Bill and Mark will staff our table. Joan will put together a handout that calls attention to our volunteer days.

Other events

- Groton River Fest is June 7
- The CFNCM Non-Profit Leadership Breakfast has been canceled

MassTrails grant award budget and progress report

We owe a bi-annual progress report on our grant award by March 15th. Joan wrote a first draft, which Bill edited.

Joan will send an email reminder for volunteer hour timesheets. Bill would like to send in our reimbursement request soon.

Fundraising and financial report

We have just over \$103K after we receive reimbursements from the MassTrails grant.

Ray mentioned Commonwealth fund grants, which Dick O'Brien described as a source of state funding in addition to MassTrails.

Conflict of interest forms / 2019 IRS Form 990

Directors signed forms attesting that we understand the conflict of interest policy. This documentation is needed for the IRS Form 990.

A motion to accept the Form 990, which Bill circulated by email on February 29, was

seconded and approved unanimously.

Review of meeting minutes

A motion to accept the minutes from our meeting on February 5, 2020 was seconded and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 7:00 PM at the Groton Legion.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz, Clerk

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