



# Winooski Valley Park District

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## Board of Trustees

### Minutes of the Meeting

April 18, 2017

The meeting began at 4:30 PM

**Present:** David Crawford (South Burlington), Tom Malinowski (Essex), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Nick Warner (Executive Director), Rita Dessau (Williston) Aaron Keech (Burlington) Lauren Chicote (Programs Director).

**Absent:** Susan Gilfillan (Colchester)

**Acceptance of minutes:** Minutes of March 21, 2017 were reviewed and accepted after corrections were discussed.

**Public Comment Period:** No members of public were present for public comment.

**Meeting Agenda Changes:** none.

#### Financial Reports from WVPD and Ethan Allen Homestead:

No report was presented from Ethan Allen Homestead, but will be available this week.

WVPD budget is doing well, with most of the expected member community contributions received. Net income is \$43,015.15. Budget report will be in new format in coming months.

**Long Range Planning:** Nick recommended that we review the 5-year master plan of 2012. He feels that it essentially is still a valid representation of our goals, but it needs updating. Aaron stated that when he reviewed it, he noticed certain themes that could be consolidated to improve its organization. Aaron also felt that discussion of the mission statement would be helpful. The current mission statement states that any community that has any part of its land in the Winooski River Basin could be a member. The current statement allows for Park District to acquire land that is in other parts of the city or town, not necessarily within the river basin. Aaron cautions against acquiring land outside of the watershed, even though it might be in a community that includes land in the river basin. Aaron will initiate discussion questions for next meeting in regard to these issues, especially clarifying mission statement. Dave stated that when our new master plan is presented to towns, we should be involving the towns in our long-range planning process. He also asks if it would be possible for member communities could have tiers of membership.

Nick reported on his discussion with Katherine Decarreau ("Deac"), formerly Winooski town manager, about the overall long-range planning process. She recommended:

- Re-engagement of our constituents in the process, through surveying.
- Academic research into more sustainable models for our organization
- Presentation of ideas to the towns this autumn

Nick stated that the draft *Funding Request to the High Meadows Fund: Strategic Planning and Outreach Services for the Winooski Valley Park District* (please see) could serve as the basis for an RFP. A High Meadows grant could enable a well-researched number of options to be discussed with member towns.

Sonja reported 4 possible strategies Deac suggested:

- Towns should share assets to reduce costs.
- A feeling of shared ownership should be developed.
- Possible inter-municipal tax district to be created by legislature?
- Engaging millennials is very helpful.

Dave stated that while we can start the process this year, we may need another year to actually develop a new formula.

Sonja requested that the High Meadows Funding Request include a category of expenditures that the Park District would incur in long-range planning, such as copying of documents for distribution, and room rental for presentations. She also requested that point #2 on page 2 re steps the consultant and staff take, to further identify the “gatherings” in member communities to discuss data.

Tom asked if Champlain College students in Service Learning Program could help us conduct the survey. Nick stated that their program is due to end within a month, so timing is an issue. Lauren will check to see if a summer program is available. Perhaps also, students could help to do surveying through our QR connections at trailheads. There will also be other people available at trailheads this summer, to help in surveying.

Nick stated the survey could not be a statistically valid study, but if we could get a few hundred responses, it would greatly inform our process.

Dave moved that Nick and Lauren initiate a grant application for long-range planning to High Meadows (after quick review of draft application). The move was seconded and passed unanimously.

**Updates: Pre-school expansion, Marina appraisal Discussion, Champlain College Student Presentation:** Please see Director’s Updates of April 12, 2017. Note that the pre-School will write a Letter of Intent Draft for its expansion and present it to our board. Burlington Parks and Rec Parks Legacy Fund will fund purchase of Rivers End Marina. Mike O’Brien will come up with a business valuation of the property. Lauren announced that Champlain College Service Learning Class will make its final presentation in the classroom of EAH at 11:30 AM on May 3; board members who are available will attend.

**Adjournment:** It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed to adjourn at 6:13 PM.

Next Meeting: May 16, 2017

Respectfully prepared by,

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Rita Dessau, Secretary