



# Winooski Valley Park District

**Ethan Allen Homestead**  
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## **Board of Trustees**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

**February 21, 2017**

**The meeting began at 4:35 PM**

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

**Acceptance of minutes:** Minutes of Jan. 17, 2017 were reviewed and accepted.

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

**Meeting Agenda Changes:** None.

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

No report was presented from Ethan Allen Homestead, as museum is currently in closed season.

WVPD Financial Report of Jan. 31, 2017 was reviewed and accepted. Nick added that this summer, specific tasks at each park will be tracked in regard to cost, to strengthen the goal of adhering to our primary conservation mission while we engage in a pilot project of fee-for-service at South Burlington.

**Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate Matter:** At 4:42 PM, it was moved, seconded, and approved to engage in executive session to discuss real estate. At 5:54 PM, the board approved ending of executive session. Susan Gilfillan moved that the board authorize Nick to discuss obtaining of funding for a real estate appraisal, from the City of Burlington, for an acquisition study of Rivers End Marina. The move was seconded and passed unanimously.

**Staffing for 2017 Season:** See Director's Updates report by Nick Warner, dated Feb 16, 2017, in relation to seasonal staffing. Contracting out the mowing of Ethan Allen Homestead will be sought, to increase efficient use of staff and funds. Schedule and staffing plan for the South Burlington contract work will be discussed in the March 2017 trustee meeting, with the goal to compensate for the \$10,000 reduction in revenue due to reduced funding from Winooski and Essex.

**Fiscal Year 2018 Member Town Funding Updates:** See Director's Updates report by Nick, Feb 16, 2017. There has been unexpected reduction in funding from Essex by \$1000, and from \$12,000 down to \$4,000 by Winooski. Further information and discussion will be sought.

**Long Range Planning:** High Meadows staff was not available to meet with WVPD board today. Nick presented a map of the Winooski River Basin, since natural resource protection of

that area is our overall goal. We already own and manage properties in many of the key conservation areas. However, we need to discuss whether other towns should be approached for inclusion in our work. We need to create a table of contents for a master plan, and discuss important geographic practices.

**Adjournment:** It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn at 6:18 PM.

**Next Meeting:** March 21, 2017 at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully prepared by,

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Rita Dessau, Secretary



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**TO: WVPD Board of Trustees**  
**FROM: Nick Warner**  
**RE: WVPD activities since previous meeting**  
**DATE: February 16, 2017**

The Board of Trustees will meet on **Tuesday, February 21st at 4:30pm** in the Winooski Valley Park District office. Please let me know if you will be unable to attend.

## DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

### Real Estate

There are several real estate opportunities that the Board will discuss in Executive Session at next weeks' meeting.

### Seasonal Staffing

WVPD staff has been crunching numbers and reviewing personnel policies to devise a staffing strategy for parks maintenance, camp session, and the South Burlington contract this coming season:

- The objective is to continue to provide excellent maintenance of our parks system, while completing contracted work in a manner that is not disruptive to our work on WVPD assets.
- The size of our crew (typically 2-3 seasonals) will be determined after we complete our analyses of maintenance needs and budget for this year.
- Tim will be obtaining estimates from private firms for mowing services at Ethan Allen Homestead (3-4 acres) to see if we can save money and free up the crews to do more skilled work in the parks.
- We will utilize the caretaker for mowing at Colchester Pond, which offers us significant savings.
- We just met with South Burlington staff and YCC to finalize a project list for contracted work. The majority of work will be at Red Rocks Park. We are now authorized for up to \$75,000 of work in South Burlington: initially we have come up with a goal of \$10,000 overall "profit". We are working on a specific schedule and staffing plan which will be presented to the Board at the March Trustee meeting.

### FY18 Funding updates:

Burlington: in FY18 draft budget

Colchester: In proposed FY18 budget

Essex: In proposed FY18 budget with \$1,000 reduction

Jericho: In proposed FY18 budget

South Burlington: In proposed FY18 budget

Williston: In proposed FY18 budget, with caveat that WVPD membership could go to vote on Town Meeting Day in 2018, unless changes made to the satisfaction of Selectboard

Winooski: Reduced to \$4,000 for FY18

### **Parks Superintendent Update:**

The 2017 Recreational Trails Grant Funding application was due this month. Tim Larned submitted two separate applications to be considered. The first was for \$5,500 in funding to help defray some of the additional costs of the required Phase I Archaeology Study at the Wolcott Family Natural Area (WFNA). The second application was for \$50,000 to help fund the replacement of the Wetlands Walk North at the Ethan Allen Homestead. Timber and Stone Construction, one of the only licensed Professional Trail Builders in VT, assessed the boardwalk and provided an estimate on its replacement. The total estimated cost was \$117,000. We hope to use this grant to leverage additional funding to cover the aging boardwalks replacement and are planning to apply in fall 2017 to the LWCF for much of the remaining cost. We also plan to apply to several private funding sources. Thanks to Aaron Keech for providing a Letter of Support as WVPD's Burlington Representative and a resident of Burlington.

The 2017 Department of Environmental Conservation Grant In Aid Program was also submitted this month. This would allow for the WVPD to fund a Greeter to be at Colchester Pond for weekend shifts from Memorial Day to Labor Day. This would be the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year we have run this program.

WVPD Staff are collaborating with State of VT Invasive Plant Coordinator Elizabeth Spinney on Invasive Management Plans for WVPD Natural Areas. Remy Crettol has done a great job getting initial surveys done for the Ethan Allen Homestead, Salmon Hole and Riverwalk and Derway Island.

### **NRCS Practices at Colchester Pond Update:**

- February 2017: Apple Tree Release, 1 acre and approximately 20 trees. Top apple trees, clear trees on 3 sides minimum. Will improve wildlife forage and habitat.
- May 2017: Shoreline planting, 2 acres, approximately 300 plants and shrubs. Will protect the Pond and improve fish habitat along the shore.
- Fall 2017: Shrubland management, 9 acres, some intensive clearing, improve habitat for birds, specifically the Golden Winged Warbler.

### **Programs Director and AmeriCorps Updates:**

Registration for S.O.L.E. Camp is officially open and registrations are rolling in! Lauren and Remy attended the KidsVT Camp & School at the beginning of the month to promote the camp and kick off registration. We currently have 18 campers enrolled, most for multiple weeks and many returning campers from previous summers. One week is already almost full with one space open, and several more are already half way full. Lauren & Remy are working on planning new activities for the camp, including bringing in some outside, volunteer expertise and looking at new places to visit for field trips.

February vacation camp takes place next week. Families can either register for the whole week or just a few days, and we have filled most days for the camp with only one full week spot open (as of Thursday 2/16). Hopefully this snow will stick around, and more will come for the week!

Starting in March, we will be providing a weekly afterschool program at Flynn and CP Smith Elementary Schools in Burlington that will run through the spring. We have scheduled several field trips and enrichment lessons with several others after school programs as well.

Remy continues to provide in-class lessons to several third grade classrooms at JFK in Winooski. He is also coordinating with Essex Middle School teachers for the annual spring service learning partnership that takes place in May.

The WVPD's animal tracking project was selected by a group from UVM's NR 206 service learning class. Remy will be working with them over the rest of the semester to monitor Colchester Pond and Derway Island. Data from this project will be used to further the iNaturalist and Citizen Science projects Remy has started, as well as set up for future classes to continue this sort of monitoring at WVPD Parks.

Lauren and Remy are working with a service learning class from Champlain College. This class will be looking at new ways for the WVPD to connect with current and potential parks users to broaden park users understanding who the WVPD is and what the WVPD does. Ideas so far have been to create social media content to promote each park, creating a sticker, and surveying/greeting park users at heavily used parks (Ethan Allen Homestead, Colchester Pond, Woodside).

Wintervale was held on Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup> during the snow storm and was a huge success! Over 500 people attended – the biggest turn out that event has ever seen! The WVPD had our snowshoes there and lead a guided nature walk. If the conditions remain this way (fingers crossed) another event is planned for Sunday March 12<sup>th</sup>.

**2017 Events/Programs:**

- Wintervale: March 12
- “Winter Wonders” vacation camp: February 27 – March 3
- Green Up Day: May 6
- Conservation Field Day: May 17th
- Sunday July 23: Paddle/Pedal Event in partnership with the Friends of the Winooski River (new event)