



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for November 17, 2020 Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District

The meeting began at 4:33PM. Meeting was held via conference video call (Zoom) due to the current situation regarding the coronavirus, COVID-19. WVPD offices are closed to the public until further notice.

Present via conference call: Aaron Keech (Burlington), Jeffery Theis (Essex), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), David Crawford (South Burlington), Erin Dupuis (Winooski), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager).

Absent: Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), John Nittler (Williston).

Public Comment Period: No members of the public were present at the time of public comment.

Dave Crawford asked to take a moment to recognize WVPD staff for their work on the FY22 budget and the budget presentation to the South Burlington City Council that occurred the night before (November 16). Dave thanked the staff for their efforts in taking the boards feedback on the draft budget and being able to synthesize it into the final version.

Agenda Changes: Item number 6. *Discuss Forest Preschool Lease* was replaced with *Anticipated Executive Session*.

Review and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings: The minutes for the October 27th meeting were reviewed. Dave Crawford motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Jeff Theis. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Review and Approve Financial Reports: The Treasurers report for the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum was presented and reviewed by the board. Overall, the Museum continues to do well even with limited hours and tour capacity this past season due to COVID-19 limitations. The Museum wrapped up its regular season of tours at the end of October and plans to continue to provide virtual content and lecture series over the winter.

The financial report for WVPD for FY21 through the month of October 2020 was presented. A deficit of \$108,748.22 was reported, as WVPD has not received most of its member town allocations for the new fiscal year as of the date of the report (October 31). WVPD did receive Jericho's first payment out of three (reflected in the report), and Essex, South Burlington, and Williston's payment were received in November (will be reflected on next month's budget report). Member towns have been invoiced for the current FY21 allocations, and WVPD expects to receive all remaining allocations by the end of the year, except for Jericho's which they receive in installments throughout the fiscal year.

Overall, WVPD's budget is on track for this time of year, despite the unforeseen expenses related to COVID-19 with the expansion of the classroom space for the Burlington Forest Preschool and needed air filter systems for all office/program spaces on the Ethan Allen Homestead Campus (WVPD office, Burlington Forest Preschool, and Ethan Allen Homestead Museum spaces). WVPD will receive a \$500 grant from the City of Burlington's Ventilation Microgrant Program to go towards the purchase of air filters, and the Burlington Forest

Preschool has received a grant that will allow them to reimburse WVPD for some of the expenses related to the classroom expansion, along with air filters for their spaces (classrooms and bathrooms). WVPD has also applied for the Expanded Economic Recovery Grant through the State's ACCD and is waiting to hear back on their application status.

Dave Crawford motioned for the WVPD's financial report to be accepted, seconded by Erin Dupuis. The report was accepted unanimously.

Discuss Wildlife Management Strategies: As a follow up from the January 2020 WVPD board meeting with Nick Fortin and Chris Saunders, from Vermont Fish and Wildlife, who presented on deer herd issues in the state, Nick Warner reached back out to them to continue the conversation. While not immediately available for follow up due to it being the middle of hunting season, they shared resources on community-based management methods that showcase what other communities across the country have done/are doing to manage deer herds on public/recreation lands. Nick Warner found that Hannover, NH was a comparable community in terms of size/scale of parks/land, demographics, and issues related to the deer population. He reached out to officials in Hannover and had a very informative phone call on the town's experience with their community-based management approach. The board discussed how potential next steps before WVPD commits to this issue would be to have a follow up conversation with Nick Fortin and Chris Saunders, from Vermont Fish and Wildlife, and to start collecting data in WVPD parks to evaluate the deer population and impact on the natural communities in and around WVPD parks. The board will continue this conversation and invite Nick Fortin and Chris Saunders to a future meeting when they are available.

Executive Session: Dave Crawford motioned for the board to enter executive session to discuss real estate matters, seconded by Aaron Keech. The board unanimously entered executive session at 5:21pm. The board left executive session at 5:31pm.

Dave Crawford motioned to accept the updated lease agreement for the Burlington Forest Preschool with the addition of amendments of the WVPD's Parks Rules being added, and for the lease to be given to the Owner, Nicole Mandeville, for review. Erin Dupuis seconded the motion; motion was accepted unanimously.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:33PM.

Next Meeting: The date for the next meeting will be December 15, 2020 at 4:30 PM via Zoom.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Lauren Chicote, Operations Manager