



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for April 27, 2021 Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District

The meeting began at 4:31PM. 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), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Jeffery Theis (Essex), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), John Nittler (Williston), Erin Dupuis (Winooski; arrived at 5:04pm), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager).

Absent: David Crawford (South Burlington).

Guests: None present

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

Agenda Changes: Questions/discussion about the Park District updates that were provided to the board was added to the agenda after the Derway Cove Conservation Easement Discussion and before the anticipated Executive Session.

Review and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings: The minutes for the March 16 meeting were reviewed. A typo was corrected in the last bullet under ‘Other Park Updates’ – the word ‘need’ was corrected to the word ‘deed’. Susan Gilfillan motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Aaron Keech. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Review and Approve Financial Reports: The financial report for FY21 through the month of March 2021 was presented to the board, showing a net income of \$63,229.88. The budget remains on track for this time in the fiscal year, and year-end projections indicate WVPD will end the fiscal year with either ‘breakeven’ or have a slight deficit. Susan Gilfillan asked about the overspending of \$17,561.22 under the Park Expenses category. Lauren Chicote explained that this category consists of several subcategories including Buildings Maintenance, Subcontracted Services, and Utilities (fuel, electric, and water). The Buildings Maintenance line was overspent due to the purchase of air filters for the WVPD offices and Hill Brownell Education Center building that houses the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum and Burlington Forest Preschool (BFPS); along with building upgrades for the expansion of the BFPS third classroom. WVPD has received \$4,500 reimbursement from BFPS for the air filters and some building upgrades. That reimbursement is reflected under the Facilities Rentals Income. Lauren explained that some of the overspending was also from the Utilities category which includes the utilities for the Hill Brownell Education Building and that a portion of the utilities for that building will be reimbursed by the BFPS. Overspending was also from Subcontracted Services for the hiring of consultant Brian Pine and for several tree removals at various parks. WVPD will receive reimbursement from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for a portion of Brian Pines time.

WVPD staff continue to seek grants to support projects as well as for COVID related financial support. The financial reports were accepted unanimously.

The Treasurers report for March 2021 for the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum was presented and reviewed by the board. The Museum continues to do well even during the off season with small income from online bookshop sales and online lecture series, along with money from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Lauren noted that under the anticipated projections through April and March, \$9,500 has been estimated for ‘PR’ – which stands for payroll rate for two employees, Executive Director Dan O’Neil, and Tour Guide and Gardner Expert Tom Sharply. The Museum plans to open with modifications on Saturday May 1st and eventually to allow for limited indoor capacity so guests can view the new exhibits in early June.

Derway Cove Draft Conservation Easement Discussion: The draft of the Conservation Easement for Derway Cove was presented to the board for review. Nick Warner explained that the easement would be jointly held by Lake Champlain Land Trust (LCLT) and Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and was a basic template used by both entities. The easement also satisfies a requirement from VHCB to convert the loan to a grant that WVPD received for the purchase and development of the park. The board discussed several items in the draft easement to be reviewed and edited by WVPD in consultation with WVPD’s lawyer, and LCLT. Items discussed included language around allowing hunting and trapping, the control of non-native diseases and pests to also include controlling native diseases and pests, and a few typos. Nick will work with LCLT to revise the draft and share the revisions with the board for approval at the May Board of Trustees meeting.

Questions/Discussion on WVPD Updates: Aaron Keech asked about the refence in the update on patching a hole in a metal door and what caused the hole to form. The door that was repaired was to the vault-toilets/outhouses near that picnic shelter at the Ethan Allen Homestead. Nick Warner explained that overtime moisture from inside the stalls had eroded the inside of the metal doors. Tim Larned, Park Superintendent, was able to repair the holes so that doors did not need to be replaced. The toilets received a major renovation this year with a new roof, interior and exterior painting, and installation of new hand sanitizing dispensers.

Executive Session: Susan Gilfillan motioned for the board to enter executive session to discuss real estate matters which premature discloser would disadvantage the Park District, seconded by Aaron Keech. The board unanimously entered executive session at 5:06PM. The board left executive session at 5:42PM with a motion from Susan Gilfillan, seconded by Aaron Keech/Jeffrey Theis.

Executive Session: Susan Gilfillan motioned for the board to enter another executive session to discuss separate real estate matters which premature discloser would disadvantage the Park District, seconded by John Nittler. The board unanimously entered executive session at 5:43PM. The board left executive session at 6:01PM with a motion from Susan Gilfillan, seconded by Aaron Keech.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:02PM.

Next Meeting: The date for the next meeting will be May 18, 2021 at 4:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: