



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for February 15th, 2022, Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District

The meeting began at 4:35 PM. Meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Present (via Zoom): Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Aaron Keech (Burlington), Jeffery Theis (Essex), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Nick Warner (WVVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVVPD Operations Manager)

Absent: Erin Dupuis (Winooski), David Crawford (South Burlington), Reid Willis (Williston)

Guests (via Zoom): John Devino (Ethan Allen Homestead Museum Board President), Fred Wiseman (Alnobaiwi), Patrick Lamphere (Alnobaiwi/Ethan Allen Homestead Board)

Public Comment Period: None present at time of public comment. The guests in attendance will participate later under the 'Discussion with Museum Renovation Project Committee' agenda item.

Agenda Changes: No changes made to the agenda.

Review and Approve Minutes from previous meeting: Two changes were made to the January 18, 2022, Draft Minutes – removing a sentence from the Operational Updates that referred to matters that should be discussed in Executive Session; and adding the purpose of entering Executive Session to discuss real estate matters for clarity. Motion to approve the minutes with the discussed changes made by Aaron Keech, seconded by Susan Gilfillan. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Review Financial reports: Lauren Chicote presented the WVVPD FY22 financial report through January 31, 2022. Budget remains on track for the fiscal year. WVVPD has received all member town allocations for FY22, with the exception of Jericho who pays in three installments (received 2 of 3); Burlington's contribution was received this month (February) and will be reflected in the financial report next month. WVVPD is waiting on quotes to improve/replace windows at the Colchester Pond Caretaker house which could be another large capital expense. WVVPD staff will be discussing how to phase in that work once quote is received. WVVPD is acting as a pass through/fiscal agent for a donation of \$10K to Alnobaiwi – WVVPD was able to receive the grant due to non-profit status and passed the donation directly onto Alnobaiwi. A memo describing the transaction has been written and shared with Alnobaiwi, along with copies of other associated paperwork, and will be kept in WVVPD financial records.

Lauren also presented the January financial report for the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum (EAHM). EAHM continues to do well financially even during the off season, bringing in small income through bookshop sales, memberships, and donations. Expenses for January were higher than normal as they included several one-time payments for memberships (Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce), biannual business registration with Vermont Secretary of State, and insurance coverage paid to WVVPD (EAHM is listed under WVVPD's insurance coverage through Vermont League of Cities and Towns). Aaron Keech asked about a \$500 expense labeled as IRS – John Devino provided information that it is the fee for changing the museums non-profit status

to be able to receive certain donation types that under current non-profit status EAHM are not eligible for. John Devino also updated the board that EAHM has hired a new Executive Director, Angela Grove, who will be starting in March 2022.

Susan Gilfillan moved to accept the financial reports; seconded by Jeff Theis. The financial reports were accepted unanimously.

Operational Updates from Lauren Chicote and Nick Warner: Prior to the board meeting a presentation created by Nick Warner was shared summarizing the history and past operation agreements between WVPD and the former Ethan Allen Homestead Trust (EAHT). Overall, the agreements were well formed establishing separate entities between the WVPD and EAHT with joint efforts to care for the property, however, they lacked clarity around the responsibility and cost sharing of building maintenance and capital improvements. Nick suggested these past agreements could be used to inform new agreements with the EAHM and Alnobaiwi, with the need to jointly plan how to do and pay for capital improvements and major improvements to the buildings and grounds. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes below.

Discussion with Museum Renovation Project Committee: John Devino, Fred Wiseman, and Patrick Lamphere were in attendance as representatives from the Project Committee to provide the board an update on and discuss the Museum Renovation Project being funded through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Grant of \$250K. Fred gave a summary of the history and evolution of the project and partnership between Alnobaiwi and Ethan Allen Homestead Museum. Alnobaiwi currently has the village and dance/ceremony grounds at the Ethan Allen Homestead with a display of Abenaki artifacts and information inside the museum building. The vision and scope of the project has changed overtime with grant fund amounts, but the goal has always been to have designated Alnobaiwi/Abenaki space – the Vermont Indigenous Heritage Center (VIHC) – within the museum building to be used as a gathering and educational space and to display Abenaki and Wabanaki artifacts that Fred will donate. Fred also shared the vision of the VIHC and the ‘Trail of Remembrance’ that would start within the museum building with artifacts displays and information, continue outside to the village and dance grounds, and the heritage and botanical gardens, and then down to the Winooski River access following a trail of native plantings and other informational displays.

Over the past few months that project group has worked to create a floor plan and space allocation proposal for the museum building renovation and have come to an agreement on a concept. The group is currently working to secure contractors with requests for qualifications out to three potential contractors; exploring the permitting and historical preservation permitting process; and working with an architect to create current condition drawings and develop concept drawings. Alnobaiwi and EAHM will be discussing and developing plans for operations of the space.

John Devino stated that the presence of Alnobaiwi and the Abenaki displays have significantly enhanced the visitor experience to the museum and site, and that the EAHM board is very supportive of the renovation project. EAHM is committed to the project and success of the VIHC/Alnobaiwi and will be coordinating in sharing resources and overseeing the site/exhibits once opened.

Nick stated that WVPD will develop a detailed memo with timeline of project and proposed plans moving forward. This will become a regular agenda item for monthly board members. Jeff Theis will also act as the board liaison and attend project meetings when available. Fred stated he would be available to attend future meetings as well.

Discussion of Forest Preschool sublet proposal: Due to operational and staff changes, the Burlington Forest Preschool (BFPS) will not hold programs this summer but is working with ONE Arts in Burlington to provide summer programming. Nick asked the board for authority to negotiate a sublet or similar agreement with ONE Arts. WVPD is seeking advice and guidance from WVPD's attorney. Susan Gilfillan suggested ONE Arts sign an agreement with lease holder (BFPS) and WVPD, and for agreement to cover what current lease with BFPS covers. Nick responded that WVPD attorney will be using current lease as basis for agreement, and that all parties (ONE Arts, BFPS, WVPD) will be required to have insurance coverages. Jeff Theis motioned to give authority to negotiate agreement with ONE Arts and BFPS with review from WVPD's attorney; Aaron Keech seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Other Business: Susan asked about the proposal for the use of trail/wildlife cameras on WVPD properties that was shared with the board documents prior to the meeting. Nick informed the board that that topic was going to be brought up in the Operations Updates but due to time constraints with Aaron Keech needing to leave the meeting by 5:30pm and losing a quorum at that point and having the guests to discuss the renovation project and the need to discuss the Forest Preschool sublet proposal, decided to ask to table that discussion until the March meeting. The board agreed was best to table as several had multiple questions. It was suggested that Kyle Tansley who submitted the proposal, join for the March meeting for a discussion.

Anticipated Executive Session: It was determined that Executive Session was not needed.

Adjourn: Susan Gilfillan moved to adjourn; Jeff Theis seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 5:36PM

Next Meeting: The date for the next meeting will be March 15th, 2022, at 4:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Lauren Chicote, WVPD Operations Manager