



# Winooski Valley Park District

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## **Minutes for April 19th, 2022, Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District**

The meeting began at 4:31 PM. Meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

**Present (via Zoom):** Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Erin Dupuis (Winooski), Jeffery Theis (Essex), Reid Willis (Williston), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager)

**Absent:** Aaron Keech (Burlington), David Crawford (South Burlington)

**Public Comment Period:** No one present from the public.

**Agenda Changes:** Addition of trail camera conversation after operation updates.

**Review and Approve Minutes from previous meeting:** Several grammatical errors corrected. Reid Willis moves to accept minutes with changes, Susan Gilfillan seconds, all in favor. Minutes unanimously approved.

**Review Financial reports:** Lauren Chicote states that there are not many changes from last month and we remain on track for this fiscal year. We received another payment from Jericho. Still anticipating park expenses being over for the windows at Colchester pond as the 50% deposit was due. We are acting as fiscal agents for Alnobaiwi for a couple grants, one is for cases for the artifacts. Sonja Schuyler notes that we have a surplus (of funds in the maintenance expense line) at this time, and asks what else would bring it down? Lauren Chicote notes that the building expenses are possible renovations to the office. Tim and crew just started and are working on park projects. Work needs to be done on equipment (mower, brush hog). Maintenance budget is mostly overspent because of the Colchester Pond windows, deposit paid, next half paid when work is done which will be in next fiscal year. Also 2-3 more people on crew will have salary expenses. Susan asks when we act as the fiscal agent, do we get a percentage of the grant? Lauren states that we get a percentage for Burlington Wildways. Alnobaiwi is just a passthrough, 10k in, 10k out. For new grants with Alnobaiwi, there will be a new agreement where we would get a percentage of the grants. Nick Warner states we will be the fiscal agent for Lake Champlain Committee invasive aquatic muscle study. Plan to remain a fiscal agent long term as there are benefits. Museum financial report presented by Lauren. Not many changes from last month. To answer the question from last month about why the museum pays Alnobaiwi \$375, it is a reimbursement for book sales and use of space. The museum is gearing up to open May 1st. Angie, the new director has been doing a lot of clearing, promotions and retaining volunteers.

Sonja Schuyler asked about executive director salary, it is under payroll. Lauren states there are some outstanding payments for rent and utilities to WVPD.

**Operational Updates from Lauren Chicote and Nick Warner:** Nick Warner starts by complimenting Lauren for her hard work and organization over the last few months. There is a letter going out to Northern Borders for a grant competition to supplement the Leahy grant. Also have an outstanding grant request for Leahy for Colchester Pond house.

Jacob parcel in Williston: Working with the church with parking for the park area. There is a housing development going in and the first permit has been approved; part of that approval is the requirement for parking for WVPD. It will likely be 2 calendar years before we have the funds/grants to get the park up in running.

Museum renovation project: Main renovation will take place in the main entrance/atrium. Zoning believes that this will be approved, we are currently in the appeal period. We don't have a general contractor (g/c) yet but are working with Bob Duncan (architect). As part of the permit process, we will ask for future use to convert the garage to office space and the other end to be enclosed for office and storage. Next meeting we should expect a new proposal and drawings. Jeff Theis questions the new proposal for both ends of the garage, will that be included in current funding? Nick states that it is part of the second tier project, possibly a year or two, but that it should be discussed in the greater terms of the project. Jeff asks if this means no bathroom work? Nick Warner states the solution is making both bathrooms gender neutral and having locks on them. Both will be retrofitted. During a large event both baths open, but during the week normal operations there will be a screen put up and only one in use. This plan does not change septic capacity.

Susan Gilfillan asks if we are changing the space between the parks district and the forest pre school and is this cost/revenue neutral? Nick Warner states that pre covid there were two classrooms in the main building, we added the 3rd classroom to the annex building. Pre school is going back to 2 classrooms. Now pre school has exclusive use of the kitchen. Rent reduced because of 1 less class room. Alnobaiwi will take over space in the annex which will eventually bring in rent. Susan asks if Alnobaiwi pay rent for that space? Nick says we are working on an agreement and we will collect fees and continue to act as a passthrough. Lauren Chicote is writing the grants for Alnobaiwi which we will collect a portion of. For the first 6-12 months, that will be the main income.

Upcoming Events: Lauren Chicote speaks to events coming up, this Friday at Muddy brook; an invasive plant removal, City of South Burlington. City Nature Challenge event with a county wide bio blitz where data collected from iNaturalist for Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski and Colchester. April 30th event at Intervale. Also, Green Up Day is coming up on May 7th.

Trail cam update: Nick Warner has not talked to Kyle. Nick believes we don't have a lot of jurisdiction. In a public space, people can film what they want as long as it is not in an illegal or harassing manner. We can come up with rules, but we may be better off asking not to as a courtesy. Susan Schuyler states that part of our mission is to protect wildlife and wildlife corridors. Continued concerns of how filming can have adverse effects on birds and other animals. Sonja Schuyler states there is a difference between someone taking photos on a hike, and installing a camera on a tree. It would be helpful if there was a more detailed plan. Susan suggests talking to an ornithologist, perhaps Cornell School of Ornithology. Nick states we will keep it on agenda and keep conversation going. Nick will discuss more with Ed Fitzpatrick about fixed cameras and if that is considered surveillance.

**Update/discussion on Jacob/Krantz Parcel:** Updates given above in Operational Updates.

**Update/discussion of Museum Renovation Project:** Updates given above in Operational Updates.

**Executive Session:** Jeffery Theis made a motion to move into executive session to discuss real estate matters that the premature disclosure could potentially damage WVPD. Susan Gilfillan seconded. The Board entered the executive session at 5:43pm. The Board exited executive session at 5:57pm with a motion from Susan Gilfillan, seconded by Reid Willis.

**Adjourn:** Jeffery Theis moved to Adjourn, Susan Gilfillan Seconded. Meeting Adjourned at 5:58 PM.

**Next Meeting:** The date for the next meeting will be May 17th, 2022, at 4:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

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Erin Dupuis, WVPD Board Secretary