



# Winooski Valley Park District

**Ethan Allen Homestead**

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

The meeting began at 4:32 PM. Meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

**Present (via Zoom):** Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Jeffery Theis (Essex), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), David Crawford (South Burlington), Reid Willis (Williston), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager).

**Absent:** Erin Dupuis (Winooski), Burlington Trustee (currently vacant)

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

**Agenda Changes:** No changes were made to the agenda.

**Review and Approve Minutes from previous meeting:** Several minor corrections were made for clarification. Dave Crawford moved to accept the minutes with the corrections; seconded by Reid Willis. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**Review Financial reports:** Lauren Chicote presented July 2021- June 2022 financials, which includes all of FY22. The presented report shows what is currently recorded in WVPD QuickBooks bookkeeping software system and shows a deficit of -\$8,255.68 – there are several journal entries/edits that need to be made to move some income/expenses between FY22 and the new FY23. There are also several outstanding invoices owed to WVPD from the Burlington Forest Preschool and Ethan Allen Homestead Museum for utilities and rent (invoices have been sent payment confirmation was received, just waiting on receiving actual checks). With the changes/outstanding income, WVPD is projecting a surplus of around \$17,000 for the end of the FY22. WVPD has an unofficial fiscal year close out date of August 15. A revised FY22 yearend report will be shared at the August trustees meeting. Susan Gilfillan commended WVPD's work to remain on budget, with a surplus, this year given all the projects/work being done, and while still in a pandemic.

Lauren Chicote shared the June 2022 Treasurers report from the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum. The Museum continues to do well this season with daily tours; however, expenses continue to be slightly more than income. Lauren recently attended the Museum's Board meeting to discuss how WVPD can assist the Museum in finding outside funding/grants to support operational upgrades to equipment, exhibits, and general operating needs. WVPD and EAHM will work together this fall on various grant applications.

**Operational Updates from Nick Warner and Lauren Chicote:** The following updates on a variety of projects/happenings were provided:

- **Riverwalk Stairs Update:** Tim Larned, WVPD Parks Superintendent, and WVPD Parks Maintenance staff worked with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) Richmond crew the last week in June on the first phase of improvements to the stairs at Riverwalk from Intervale Road in Burlington. Improvements included replacing many aging steps, water bars and retaining walls, trail resurfacing, and natural vegetative plantings along the trail edge. VYCC Crew labor and materials for this project were made

available through a \$20,000 Vermont Recreational Trails Program grant awarded to WVPD. More improvements to come later this season with a second week of the VYCC on site.

- **Alnobaiwi Lab Improvements:** Alnobaiwi started work on the back-office space (formerly occupied by the Burlington Forest Preschool) in WVPD's office building at the beginning of July and have made tremendous progress in transforming the space into a lab for processing artifacts and holding educational courses. It has been a community effort with many from Alnobaiwi lending their time to paint, install fixtures, and outfit the space. Visitors to the Ethan Allen Homestead can look through a window into the space to see what is happening with a **sign** explaining any projects that are taking place.
- **Derway Cove Opening event:** A soft opening event for Derway Cove will be held in late-August on either Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> or Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup>. WVPD is working with project partner, Lake Champlain Land Trust, to finalize details and invite list. A new kiosk sign is being installed over the next few weeks.
- **Grant Applications:** WVPD will be applying for an Operational Support Grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to retain Phelan Fretz as consultant to assist with the Vermont Indigenous Heritage Center/Museum Renovation Project.

WVPD will also be applying for a City of Burlington Community Economic Development Office (CEDO) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for additional funds to support the renovation of the barn/museum building at the Ethan Allen Homestead. This application will cover general upgrades and improvements to the overall building including roof replacement, energy efficiency upgrades, window replacements, electrical, etc. **WVPD is eligible for two applications rounds over next year.**

WVPD will be supporting the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum in grant applications to support their general operations including IT upgrades, educational program development, and exhibit installation. Several grant sources to support these projects will become available starting in the fall.

WVPD is also seeking matching funds for the completion of the Wetlands Walk North at the Ethan Allen Homestead. WVPD received \$50K with a VOREC grant in partnership with the City of Burlington for the first phase of the wetlands walk replacement/improvements.

**Discuss Draft Camera Policy:** Nick Warner shared a draft of a policy for fixed cameras/wildlife cameras on WVPD lands. The draft is based off conversations/feedback from WVPD's attorney, previous Board discussions, and language from the National Park Service and other similar park/municipal agencies. The draft policy applies to fixed cameras and related fixed equipment and requires the request to be affiliated with an institution either for research or law enforcement purposes, have set installation and removal dates, and have prior approval from WVPD. Policy gives WVPD discretion over requests that could impact general park use. Susan Gilfillan noted that such impacts should also include impact to the natural environment, plant communities, and wildlife within the parks. Reid Willis noted the policy should be framed in a welcoming way and make clear what users are allowed and not allowed to do. WVPD's attorney will review draft again with discussion points from Board; an updated draft will be shared at August meeting.

**Update/Discussion on City of Essex WVPD Membership:** Nick Warner, Sonja Schuyler, and

Lauren Chicote met with Brad Luck, interim City Manager. City of Essex would like to have joining WVPD as a member community as a ballot item in November. WVPD will give a presentation to the City Council on August 10<sup>th</sup>. The City will draft the language for the ballot item and share ahead of being approved. WVPD will receive full allocation from Essex for FY23 budget. FY24 budget may be impacted by the November vote, depending on outcome. Susan Gilfillan noted that either outcome should be kept in mind when drafting the FY24 budget this fall.

**Update on Alnobaiwi Lease and Other Pending Agreements:** WVPD is waiting review of current agreement from attorney, no draft for Board to review currently. Sonja Schuyler asked about the space being labeled as a lab and what sort of activities will take place in it, with the concern of chemicals/solvents being used in the space. Nick responded that the lab aspect will primarily be the research on and restoration of artifacts and that harsh chemicals/solvents are not planned to be used. Alnobaiwi will be responsible for having insurance that covers the space adequately as designation of a lab.

**Executive Session:** Susan Gilfillan motioned to move into executive session to discuss **real estate matters** that the premature disclosure of could potentially damage WVPD. Dave Crawford seconded. The Board entered executive session at 5:43 PM. Reid Willis moved to end executive session; Dave Crawford seconded. The Board left executive session at 5:43 PM.

Susan Gilfillan motioned to rescind the no trespass order dated June 12, 1998, to Mr. Patrick Simoneau; given there has been no further action/incident since the original incident and in recognition of positive relationship between Mr. Simoneau and WVPD since. Jeff Theis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Adjourn:** Susan Gilfillan moved to adjourn, seconded by David Crawford A. Meeting Adjourned at 5:53 PM.

**Next Meeting:** The date for the next meeting will be August 16th, 2022, at 4:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

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Lauren Chicote, Operations Manager