



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for May 16, 2023, Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District

The May 16, 2023, meeting began at 4:33 PM. Meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Present (via Zoom): Andrew Gregg (Burlington), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), Jeffery Theis (Essex), George Tyler, (Essex Junction), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Reid Willis (Williston), Tim Larned (WVPD Parks Superintendent), Lauren Chicote (WVPD Operations Manager). **Guests:** Wayne Howe

Absent: David Crawford (South Burlington), Nick Warner (WVPD Executive Director), Winooski representative (seat currently vacant).

Public Comment Period: Wayne Howe, from Jericho joined the meeting. He has visited several WVPD parks and is interested in learning more about plans for planting projects that would enhance wildlife habitat. Tim provided updates on various tree planting projects at the Ethan Allen Homestead and Derway Cove.

Agenda Changes: No changes to the agenda were made.

Review and Approve Minutes from previous meeting: The board reviewed the April 18, 2023, meeting minutes. George Tyler moved to accept the minutes with the correction of a typo; seconded by Andrew Gregg/Susan Gilfillan. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Review Financial reports: Lauren Chicote shared the financial report for FY23: July 1 – April 30, 2023. The budget remains on track and early projections indicate WVPD will end the fiscal year with a slight net positive. Sonja Schuyler asked about updates on grants. Tim Larned provided updates on several open grants including the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) grant for the stairs on the Riverwalk Trail – work was done last summer, and the reimbursement request was submitted at the end of March and should be received before the end of the fiscal year.

The Ethan Allen Homestead Museum Treasurer Report for April 2023 was shared. Financially the Museum continues to do well. The Museum received a \$7,500 grant from the Vermont Arts Council Creative Futures Award that covered a percentage of lost income during the pandemic. The Museum also received a grant for IT upgrades for their tours and lecture/speaker events. The upgrades included a new TV for the video portion of the tour, and upgrades to their computer system to make it easier to live stream and record speaker events. The Museum opened May 1, and has had steady visitation, along with numerous school and private group tours.

George Tyler motioned to accept the financial reports, seconded by Susan Gilfillan. The financial reports were unanimously accepted.

Updates and Discussion with Tim Larned, Parks Superintendent: Tim Larned provided updates to the board on the following:

The lease with Alnobaiwi has been officially executed and signed. Alnobaiwi and the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum hosted an opening event for the *Abenaki: Vermont's First People* exhibit on May 6 that was well attended.

The \$115k Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) request for funding to replace the EAHM barn roof and make repairs at the Allen House has yielded a recommendation for partial funding in the amount of \$43,000 by the Steering Committee. This recommendation needs to go through additional review/process but is a very positive development. Monies would become available on July 1st.

WVDP is working with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) on a Water Quality Grant that would mitigate runoff and erosion at Colchester Pond and pre-qualify WVDP as a subcontractor for projects.

After extensive review and multiple discussion with adjacent landowners, public access options for the “Jacob-Krantz parcel” in Williston is still focused on Trinity Baptist Church. With the recent tabling of their housing development (which had the access and parking in the design), WVDP is approaching the church about our original plan for a stand-alone access and parking area. The Church is undergoing some changes in leadership, and a formal letter is being prepared with a summary of what has occurred so far, and a proposal to create the access as we originally envisioned before the housing proposal process occurred.

Getting parks ready for the opening season continues, along with hiring new maintenance staff. The gate to the Wolcott Family Natural Area was opened today; other park gates have already been opened. One employee will be returning, and Tim plans to hire 2-3 more for the season.

WVDP has hosted several volunteer groups this spring helping to clean up parks for the season, removing invasive plants, and planting trees as part of riparian restoration projects. Volunteers include groups from Champlain College, South Burlington High School, Intervale Center, and One Tree Planted.

Park projects planned for the summer include continuing improvements and upgrades to the stairs and trail at Riverwalk in Burlington; trail upgrades at Colchester Pond with a Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) team; and starting work on replacing the Wetlands Walk Boardwalk at the Ethan Allen Homestead as part of the VOREC Grant WVDP received last year with the City of Burlington.

Adjourn: Susan Gilfillan motioned to adjourn, seconded by Jeffrey Theis/George Tyler.
Meeting Adjourned at 5:17PM.

Next Meeting: June 20, 2023, at 4:30pm

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Lauren Chicote, Operations Manager