



Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

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Minutes for January 21, 2025, Board of Trustees for Winooski Valley Park District

The meeting began at 4:31pm. Meeting was held both in person at the WVPD Offices at the Ethan Allen Homestead in Burlington and virtually via Zoom.

Present: Via zoom: Andrew Gregg (Burlington), Susan Gilfillan (Colchester), George Tyler (Essex Junction), Sonja Schuyler (Jericho), Larry Kupferman (South Burlington), Reid Willis (Williston), Bridget O'Brien (Winooski), Lauren Chicote (Operations Manager) **In Person at WVPD Office:** Nick Warner (Executive Director). **Absent:** Jeffery Theis (Essex).

Guests (present via zoom): Bryn Oakleaf (Winooski City Councilor); Ken Signorello (Essex Junction Trails Committee Chair)

Public Comment Period: Ken Signorello spoke to the Board about the canoe launch project WVPD is supporting in Essex Junction and expressed his appreciation for the support on the project in securing a grant from VHCB for the feasibility study of the site. Ken also noted that Essex Junction has hired a new Parks Maintenance staff person and Trails Coordinator.

Agenda Changes: No changes to the agenda were made.

Review and Accept Minutes from previous meetings: The Board reviewed the December 17, 2024, minutes. Two typos were noted for correction. George Tyler moved to accept the December minutes with corrections, seconded by Larry Kupferman. The December minutes were unanimously accepted.

Review and Accept Financial Reports: Lauren Chicote presented the July 1 – December 31, 2024, financial report for the current fiscal year, FY2025. It is halfway through the fiscal year, and Lauren reported that overall, the budget continues to remain on track, except for anticipated overspending on the Buildings Maintenance line due to replacing windows in the Ethan Allen Homestead Education Center/Barn and WVPD office as previously mentioned. George Tyler moved to accept the financial reports, seconded by Larry Kupferman. The financial report was unanimously approved.

Discussion with Guest Bryn Oakleaf (Winooski City Council): WVPD staff invited Bryn Oakleaf to attend the board meeting as a follow-up to the discussion with the City of Winooski regarding Memorial Park and potential transfer of ownership and management to WVPD. Bryn asked questions regarding WVPD's planning process for parks, how maintenance issues are handled, and general operations of the Park District. The Board and Bryn discussed the history of the City and WVPD, handling of issues around erosion and water quality, and the benefits of WVPD as a regional entity.

Staff Updates/Discussion: Nick updated the board on and the board discussed several topics including relationship history with the Ethan Allen Homestead and stewardship of the Allen House; grants being submitted by the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum for maintenance of the Allen House; grant updates on the feasibility study from VHCB for the canoe access in Essex Jct., and Burlington Conservation Legacy Funds for the Wetlands Walk North board at the Ethan Allen Homestead; insurance reimbursement for the October break-in of the Education

Center/Barn at the Ethan Allen Homestead; grant administration for the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum from the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership.

Executive Session: The Board discussed the need to enter executive session and deemed it necessary as the discussion topic concerned a real estate matter that has not been discussed in the public domain previously. Susan Gilfillan moved to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the real estate matter would clearly place the WVPD at a substantial disadvantage, because the Board of Trustees risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses the real estate matter in public; the motion was seconded by George Tyler. The motion was unanimously approved. Susan Gilfillan then moved that the Board enter Executive Session to discuss two real estate matters under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes; seconded by Larry Kupferman. The motion was unanimously approved. The board entered Executive Session at 5:40pm.

George Tyler moved to exit Executive Session, seconded by Susan Gilfillan. The motion was unanimously approved. The Board exited Executive Session at 6:09pm.

Adjourn: George Tyler motioned to adjourn, seconded by Andrew Gregg. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Next Meeting: February 18, 2025, at 4:30pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: Lauren Chicote, Operations Manager, January 31, 2025.

Minutes Approved by WVPD Board of Trustees: