

Bonnet Shores Land Trust
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, 8-5-2021
Meeting held at the Community Center

The meeting of the Land Trust was called to order by Outgoing Chair Len Mercier at 7:00 PM.

Those in attendance included Trustee's George Monaghan, Stephen Puerini, Mary Flynn, Salvatore Loporchio and Arthur Hardy. Outgoing Chair Lenny Mercier and Council liaison Bill Delgizzo were also present.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of the June 9th, 2021 meeting were approved as presented.

Introductions of new Trustees

Len Mercier led the introductions of Trustees to the Land Trust that included Mary Flynn, George Monaghan, Stephen Puerini, Arthur Hardy and existing Trustee Salvatore Loporchio.

Terms and Officers

It was decided to follow popular vote for two Trustees to serve for 3 years and the other two to serve for 2 years. Mary Flynn and George Monaghan will serve the 3 year terms and Arthur Hardy and Stephen Puerini will serve the 2 year term. After discussion it was agreed to have George Monaghan serve as Chair and Mary Flynn will serve as Vice Chair for this 2021-2022 year. Lenny Mercier will serve as clerk and Bill Delgizzo will be the liaison from the Council.

Old Business:

Report on progress of Nature Trail behind Community Center

Neal Colman was called on for report. Neal reported that the ½ mile Nature Trail was coming along quite well, on land owned by the Land Trust behind the Community Center. Boy Scouts, as an Eagle Scout project, will build two bridges over shallow water brooks. Work will begin on August 14th with August 21st as the projected end date. Neal is hoping to get someone to build a couple of small crossovers and possibly a couple of benches. Steve Puerini mentioned that maybe benches could be sponsored in memory of individuals. There was a question about liability insurance and the District's insurance policy will cover the liability. A grand opening will be held once the bridge work is complete along with needed signage. More than likely a grant opening would be in the Spring. Also questioned was the trail and bridges being ADA accessible. Neal will check with South County Land Trust to see how this is handled with their trails. Arthur made a motion to have Neal Colman be the contact for the Trail Project, motion was seconded by Salvatore Loporchio and all were in favor.

New Business:

Paper Road Concern

A tax payer reported to Lenny that on Lake Road there was a Paper Road cleared of trees, while the abutter was having their property cleared. Trustees discussed who owned the paper roads and whether the Council should deal with this issue. Anita Langer talked about the Garrafallo Survey and how there were so many encroachments that the town would not accept ownership of the roads in 1992 when the District wanted them to take them over. The town would not accept them at that time but agreed to plow and maintain the roads but they would remain the District's, which is the Land Trust. Further discussion will be needed on this for clarity.

Public Comments:

John Carvalho mentioned that he was excited to see everyone at the meeting and happy to be part of the Nature Trail Project.

Stephen Puerini asked a few questions; Is there a budget for the Land Trust and Lenny responded that this year the Land Trust did not ask for funds knowing that the District was spending a lot of money on the Little Beach clearing and that the Land Trust had enough money in it's account to meet the needs this year. Bill Delgizzo said that he had never seen a budget request to the Council. Lenny reported that the other two years that he chaired, the Land Trust submitted budgets for consideration with the District. The Land Trust set a figure of up to \$8,000 to be spent on the Nature Trail, leaving \$3,000 available for Legal and other fees. Next question was about if the Land Trust was making land acquisition as a priority. Yes land acquisitions is a priority and continues to be. Many want to donate property after it has had years of building late overdue taxes, interest and fines. The Land Trust can work with the District for forgiveness but has not been able to get Narragansett to forgive. Currently we are working with a couple of properties, trying to help with clearing title to help with donations. Stephen made a motion to form a committee to work on this. Mary seconded. This will have further discussion at the next meeting, forming committees.

George Monaghan mentioned that the Land Trust Mission Statement and Bylaws can be found on the Land Trust's Website.

Salvatore Loporchio brought up that we should consider zoom meetings since the Covid variants are becoming more prevalent. As of right now the Land Trust has to follow open meeting laws. The Land Trust follows what the Council is doing and the Council has to follow the state. Presently the state mandates that public meetings must now be in person. There was questions about doing zoom so that people out of town could take part in the meeting. Further discussion will need to be done on this. It was decided that until further notice anyone attending any Land Trust meetings must wear a mask. Salvatore reported that he had been contacted with a question about the Battery. When at the Battery you no longer can see the Bay from the property and was there anything that could be done to clear the area. When the Dickinsons lived next to the Battery, Bill used to clear that area. The District Manager is aware of this and is looking into having someone clear it.

Next Meeting

Meetings will continue to be held on the last Monday of the month, 7:00 PM at the community center. Next meeting will be Monday, August 30th, 7:00 PM.

Adjournment: Salvatore moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM, seconded by Arthur, all were in favor.

Len Mercier, Clerk