

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST
REGULAR MEETING
March 10, 2015

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on March 10, 2015 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Mitchell, Russell K. Gross, Gene Cavaliere, Roy Najecki, Rebecca Schultz, Steven St. Pierre and legal counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: George Charette

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: Elizabeth Colwell Carlson, John Glass, Leslie Hyde, Edna Kent and Connie Manes

Pledge of Allegiance

Open Forum Agenda Items Only No one present wished to speak at this time.

Election of Officers for 2015: Legal counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr. presided over the election of the Chair. Russell K. Gross nominated Stephen Mitchell as the Chair, Gene Cavaliere seconded the nomination and nobody opposed it. Roy Najecki made a motion to appoint Stephen Mitchell as the Chair of the GLT for 2015; it was seconded by Russell K. Gross and passed unanimously.

Roy Najecki nominated Steven St. Pierre as the Vice-Chair, Russell K. Gross seconded the nomination and nobody opposed it. Roy Najecki made a motion to appoint Steven St. Pierre as the Vice-Chair of the GLT for 2015; it was seconded by Russell K. Gross and passed unanimously.

Russell K. Gross nominated Roy Najecki as the Treasurer, Steven St. Pierre seconded the nomination and nobody opposed it. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to appoint Roy Najecki as the Treasurer of the GLT for 2015; it was seconded by Rebecca Schultz and passed unanimously. The officers stayed the same as they were for most of 2014.

Russell K. Gross motioned to move the Executive Session up for the consideration of the guests in attendance that are at the meeting for the sole purpose of speaking to the board; it was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and passed unanimously.

Executive Session: A motion was made by Steven St. Pierre to convene to Executive Session; it was seconded by Russell K. Gross and passed by all. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to leave Executive Session, Russell K. Gross seconded the motion and it passed by all.

Executive Session Motions:

Title 42 Section 42-46-5 (5) Purposes for which meeting may be closed to the public

Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public.

- a. Acquisition of land and / or conservation easement: None

Approval of minutes of previous meetings

- a. Russell K. Gross made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 24, 2015 meeting; it was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and passed unanimously with Rebecca Schultz abstaining due to her absence at that meeting.

Approval of Bills

- a. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to pay the recording clerk Judi Rix \$145 for the February 24, 2015 meeting minutes as well as the additional \$11.09 FICA charge to the town; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to pay John Bevilacqua's February 2015 bill for \$1,000; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously.

Old Business

- a. Youth Leadership and RI Wild Plant Society Grant Proposal: Rebecca Schultz has provided Stephen Mitchell with a copy of the grant package for \$1,000 that she submitted in conjunction with Ponaganset High School. Roy Najecki made a motion to endorse the grant application; Steven St. Pierre seconded and it passed unanimously.
- b. Trail Inspection Protocol Approval: John Bevilacqua reviewed the draft policy and made a couple of revisions. Rebecca Schultz made a motion to approve the amended trail inspection protocol; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously. Steven St. Pierre has set up two training sessions on March 23, 2015 for the GLT volunteers with a PowerPoint presentation that will mirror the protocol. Russell K. Gross made a motion to approve the training sessions; Rebecca Schultz seconded and it passed unanimously.

New Business

- a. Connie Manes: National Accreditation takes many steps to achieve. Accreditation is like an audit; it is about compliance, not about how good a land trust you are. It is based on measurable things, regulations, legal practices, compliance and risk. There are 301 land trusts that are accredited, and only 4 in RI. Of the 301, there is only one other land trust that is quasi-government like the Gloucester Land Trust. The benefits of accreditation are: recognition among peers, public recognition (donors), some states provide special recognition and some funders give preference to accredited land trusts. Accreditation will come with suggestions for areas that could be improved and when you apply for renewal you must show evidence of improvements made.

Six Steps in accreditation process: Assess readiness, prepare/assess gaps, register, complete application, receive accreditation and apply for renewal (every 5 years).

Preparation: Need an organizational assessment; 3 years of monitoring; baseline documentation reports for all easements (4); management plans for all fee properties (13); stewardship reserve fund; compilation/review/audit policies on conflicts, records, easement amendment and easement enforcement. There are 26 indicator practices that are evaluated and the commission is more concerned with easements and how their obligations are filled than with fee properties.

Steps in application process: The board would register the year prior to applying (\$850 fee), complete a pre-application (Jan & June), complete 40-page application (April and Sept/Oct, \$1645* fee), receive phone call (Approx. 2 months after), follow-up documentation request (7-10 days later) and then an answer.

What's next: Assess your organization (Connie helps with this), establish stewardship reserves, do file inventory to identify issues and documentation gaps, create monitoring consistency.

Stephen Mitchell is concerned with the standards/indicators changing during the accreditation process. He would hate to have to re-do things and he does not want to put the board through that. The board will need to discuss the timeline for going forward and think about if they want to proceed with the accreditation at this time. Mr. Mitchell will distribute copies of Ms. Manes' presentation to the trustees and it will be put on a future agenda for discussion.

b. Approval of volunteer application: Steven St. Pierre made a motion to accept Jo-Ann Wendoloski as a new volunteer; Russell K. Gross seconded and it passed unanimously.

Open Forum Stephen Mitchell decided that due to the time, all other items on the agenda that the board did not address will be postponed until the next meeting in April. Mr. Mitchell did want to update the board on a couple of items: Baseline docs are for GTL only, management plans are the only things that need to be provided to D.E.M. and the GLT has a post office box now (P.O. Box HH). Rebecca Schultz cannot attend the Land Trust conference on this Saturday, and asked if Gene's son could go in her place. (He is a GLT volunteer) John Bevilacqua indicated that the board would need to approve that change and that it is too late for that to happen now. The board also decided that they would not hold a workshop meeting in March, so the next meeting will be held on April 14, 2015.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Russell K. Gross made a motion to adjourn at 9:35 p.m. The motion was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and it passed unanimously.

APPROVED AT APRIL 14, 2015 MEETING.