

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST
REGULAR MEETING
January 9, 2018

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on January 9, 2018 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Mitchell, Gene Cavaliere, Steven St. Pierre, Russell K. Gross, Janine Pitocco (arrived a little late), Roy Najecki and legal counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: Steven St. Pierre and David Piccirillo

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: Eagle Scout Cam Leach

Pledge of Allegiance

Open Forum Agenda Items Only: No one present wished to speak.

Approval of minutes of previous meetings

a. Roy Najecki made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 14, 2017 meeting; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Roy Najecki provided an updated treasurer's report which reflected all expenses up until the last meeting in November. Stephen Mitchell made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills:

- a. Russell K. Gross made a motion to pay the recording clerk Judi Rix \$164.00 for the November 14, 2017 meeting minutes and hyperlinking of agenda; Roy Najecki seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- b. Russell K. Gross made a motion to pay John J. Bevilacqua \$1,000 for monthly services for November 2017; Gene Cavaliere seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- c. Roy Najecki made a motion to pay the USPS \$120.00 for semi-annual box rental services; Gene Cavaliere seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. This was not due until the end of February, but Chairman wanted to avoid not paying it on time and getting charged a late fee again.
- d. Russell K. Gross made a motion to pay the Rhode Island Land Trust Council \$400.00 for 2017-2018 annual dues; Gene Cavaliere seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with Roy Najecki abstaining due to his role on the Board of Directors for the RI Land Trust Council.

At this point in the meeting, Chairman Stephen Mitchell invited Eagle Scout Cam Leach up to the front of the room to get his paperwork signed off on for his recent trail sign project; this way Mr. Leach could be on his way.

Old Business

a. Installation of Additional Gates and Property Signs at GLT Properties: The Board has two more gates to install and will be asking Jim Gervasio of Gervasio Construction Company to install them; just waiting on better weather.

b. Trail Grant Application – Joe Sweet Property: The Board did receive the grant for \$3,000 and the funds can be used for a parking area that will provide access to the new Moffitt Trail. The original RFP will need to be looked at again to ensure the project is completed properly. Since the original RFP was put

together, having multiple layers of gravel / loam has been suggested as a better way to achieve the desired results. This new approach should minimize the stone from washing away, but might be more than \$3,000.

c. Colwell Property Grant Application Update: Chairman Steven Mitchell received notification that Les Hyde, the landowners nephew that was helping her with this process, passed away on December 25, 2017. Chairman Mitchell also received a call from D.E.M. to go out and tour the property as part of the grant request they are considering from the Board. The Board has done all it can do for now, and just has to wait and see if they get awarded the grant. No decision will be made on this until they receive an answer on the grant.

New Business

Since there are no guests present, Chairman Stephen Mitchell would like to table both items A&B until the January 23, 2018 GLT workshop meeting. Roy Najecki made a motion to table both items A&B until the January 23, 2018 GLT workshop meeting; Russell K. Gross seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- a. Recognition of Town Highway Director and Department: Tabled until 1/23/18 meeting.
- b. Recognition of Eagle Scouts and Boy Scout Troop 44 Gloucester: Tabled until 1/23/18 meeting.

c. Construction of Bridges on Phillips Farm Property: Chairman Steven Mitchell received a call from a neighbor of the Steere Hill property about an equestrian group that he knew of that was willing to pay for bridges to be built on Phillips Farm. The Massachusetts Riders Club indicated they would subsidize the cost of the bridges, and would be applying for a grant to pay for the expense of the building materials. However, the Gloucester Land Trust would be responsible for actually building them. The Board Members asked why they should consider taking this on. This is a volunteer Board and none of the Members are qualified to build a bridge. Attorney Bevilacqua stated that this is clearly a liability issue. After some discussion, the Board decided to decline this offer for now; Chairman Mitchell will send them a letter on behalf of the Board advising them of the decision to not pursue this at this time.

d. Volunteer Applications – Steve Brown 11/19/17; Jillian Gazzara 12/26/17: The Board received applications from Mr. Brown and Ms. Gazzara to become volunteers. Gene Cavaliere made a motion to approve and accept the application submitted by Jillian Gazzara to become a GLT volunteer; seconded by Roy Najecki and it passed unanimously. Roy Najecki made a motion to approve and accept the application submitted by Steve Brown to become a GLT volunteer; seconded by Janine Pitocco and it passed unanimously. Chairman Mitchell will notify them of their acceptance.

e. Town of Gloucester Summer Youth Employment: Roy Najecki asked for this item to be placed on the agenda, and would like the Board to consider hiring 3-4 youths to help with general and trail maintenance. The Board could apply for a grant that would cover 80% of the cost, and a list of projects and their time commitments would need to be developed. Chairman Mitchell is concerned with a few things, primarily who would be providing direct supervision of these youths and the use of equipment by them. The Chairman’s preference would be to incorporate these workers into the town’s program, and asked if Gloucester had a summer youth director. Attorney Bevilacqua also pointed out that worker’s comp would need to be considered, as well as if The Trust would approve of it. Roy Najecki will speak to Gary Trembl of the DPW, the Town of Smithfield program director and investigate this further to bring more information back to the Board at the February meeting.

f. DEM Tree Grant – Roy Najecki asked for this to be placed on the agenda, and was thinking the grant would be a good way to have projects for the summer youth initiative he was hoping to start. This may not be an option the board wishes to pursue if they do not hire any summer workers. The grant is offered annually by D.E.M., and Mr. Najecki thought they could have the summer workers move invasive plants on the top of Steere Hill. D.E.M reimburses 40% of costs to tackle such projects. Chairman Mitchell

appreciated Mr. Najecki's efforts, but thought it would be best to table this item until a decision is made on the summer youth employment. Roy Najecki made a motion to table this item until a decision is made on the summer youth employment; seconded by Janine Pitocco and it passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

a. Town Council Liaison Inquiry re: Legal Representation at Board Meetings of GLT 12/18/17: Chairman Mitchell received an email from Town Council President Walter Steere questioning the need for legal counsel at the meetings for the cost of \$2,000/month. Chairman Mitchell responded to Mr. Steere indicating that the GLT would consider using the Town Solicitor at the Town Council's expense if that was being offered. The GLT is satisfied with the legal counsel they currently have, and hiring legal counsel is within their administrative responsibilities. Attorney Bevilacqua pointed out that it would be a conflict of interest for the Town Solicitor to represent both the GLT and the Town Council. The Board has only been meeting once a month for quite a while, with a second meeting only when necessary, so the monthly bill has been \$1,000 not \$2,000 most of the time. Attorney Bevilacqua is always available to the Board members and has not billed the Board for all of the various times the members have reached out to him with questions or special requests. Russell K. Gross wanted it on the record that "When you get a lawyer that either answers you when you call, or calls you back within 15 minutes, you keep them. Not only that, but the Board can hire whoever they want."

b. Jonathan Geiger -- 11/27/17: Chairman Mitchell received an email from Mr. Geiger that contained pictures from the Heditsian plaque dedication held on Steere Hill this past fall. Chairman Mitchell then forwarded those pictures to Vice-Chairman Steven St. Pierre to put them on the GLT website.

c. Rupert Friday – 11/27/17 NCRS funding opportunities: Rupert Friday sent a notice to all RI land trusts regarding NCRS funding opportunities, but Roy Najecki indicated that the Gloucester Land Trust would not be eligible to receive any of those funds because they are a municipal land trust.

d. John Boucher – 11/24/17: Chairman Mitchell received an email from Mr. Boucher saying how much he is enjoying the recent improvements (benches and signage) to the trails at Steere Hill, and the Board should keep up the good work.

Trail Inspection and Volunteer Hour(s) Reports: Roy Najecki conducted a few trail inspections while he was out looking for a dead deer someone had reported; he did not find any sign of a dead deer anywhere. Mr. Najecki also wanted to measure the portion of Haystack Trail that is in need of repair. A portion of that trail (500 feet in length) is consistently underwater and should be built up, unfortunately that would be a very big project and would require a significant amount of materials.

Monthly GLT Activities / Reports: No GLT sponsored activities to report on.

Open Forum: Member Gene Cavaliere attended a global warming presentation at the Scituate Senior Center and found it very interesting that the people in attendance did not believe the Johnston Landfill was RI's biggest problem. Chairman Mitchell also wanted to mention a call he had received recently from a real estate agent in Massachusetts, on behalf of their client, asking about hunting on Seldom Seen Farm. Chairman Mitchell informed them that the only hunting allowed is compound bow hunting, and there are no established trails "yet" on the property for the public to use. The Board could always consider establishing trails in the future.

Executive Session: There was no Executive Session at this meeting.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Russell K. Gross made a motion to adjourn at 8:06p.m. The motion was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and it passed unanimously.

APPROVED AT JANUARY 23, 2018 MEETING.