

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST
REGULAR MEETING
June 11, 2019

The regular meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on June 11, 2019 at the Gloucester Town Hall. Chair Stephen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Mitchell, Steven St. Pierre, Roy Najecki, Russell K. Gross, Gene Cavaliere, David Piccirillo and Legal Counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: Janine Pitocco

Minutes: Judi Rix

Guests: None

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of minutes of previous meetings (discussions and /or action):

- a. Russell K. Gross made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 28, 2019 meeting; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously with Steven St. Pierre abstaining due to his absence at that meeting.

GLT Treasurer's Report (discussions and /or action): Treasurer Roy Najecki provided an updated treasurer's report for the rest of the Board to review; there was nothing remarkable from last month. Gene Cavaliere made a motion to accept the report as presented; it was seconded by Russell K. Gross and passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills (discussions and /or action):

- a. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to pay Judi Rix a total of \$164.00 for April 09, 2019 Minutes; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.
- b. Russell K. Gross made a motion to pay John J. Bevilacqua, Sr. a total of \$1,000.00 for Legal Services for May 2019; it was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and passed unanimously.
- c. Steven St. Pierre made a motion to pay Pare Corporation a total of \$8,196.01 for Professional Services from April 27 to May 31, 2019; it was seconded by Gene Cavaliere and passed unanimously.
- d. Russell K. Gross made a motion to pay RI Interlocal Trust a total of \$4,000.00 for the Yearly Premium Renewal; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.

Old Business (discussion and/or action):

a. Status of workability of new iPads: Chairman Stephen Mitchell asked if anyone else besides Gene Cavaliere was having issues with their IPAD. David Piccirillo stated that he was having a minor issue with his. Chairman Mitchell advised both of them to reach out to Rob Bonnell for assistance; Mr. Bonnell may even be able to remote into their systems to see what the problem is.

b. Eagle Scout Project Update: Roy Najecki heard from Eagle Scout Donald Rossi, and the project will be completed by August. Mr. Rossi has been told the location of where the kiosk should go, and also been given the name to put on it. Creating a trail at that site will be a good fall project for Mr. Najecki.

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c. Removal of tree at Steere Hill Parking Lot and placement of GLT sign: The Board has already agreed to remove the tree to accommodate the new sign, but they wanted to make a motion to make it official. Roy Najecki made a motion to take down the tree at the Steere Hill parking area to accommodate the new sign; David Piccirillo seconded and it passed unanimously. Russell K. Gross pointed out that since the town DPW is putting up the sign, maybe they could be asked to take down the tree so the project can move forward. D'Amra Construction has also indicated to Chairman Mitchell that they may be able to help fill the hole in the Steere Hill parking area with some extra fill from the Route 44 road project; this would help with getting the parking area expanded.

d. Inspection of Hopkins Property Encroachment Update: Roy Najecki went out and visited the site today. The garden shed is still on GLT property, the pool is gone, but there are now ratcheting straps and exercise equipment in its place. The landowner also appears to be dumping debris and yard waste onto GLT property. Mr. Najecki will return to the site and take pictures, so Attorney Bevilacqua can draft a new letter to the landowner.

New Business (discussions and/or action):

a. Clarkville School and Hawkins Garage Inspection Report: Chairman Mitchell, Vice Chairman Steven St. Pierre and Member David Piccirillo went out to the sites and took a good look at their condition. The discussion started with the condition of the Hawkins garage, and what poor condition that building is in. It appears that there was a significant fire in there at one point; the floor is sagging, there are burnt beams and supports and in general the building probably should have been taken down when the house was. The Board believes it would cost a lot of money to even get the building usable, and then what would they use it for? The Board has no plans for the structure, and Member Najecki can't justify the cost of repairs when there is no plan to use the building. The Board would notify the Town Council, as a courtesy, if they decide to demolish the structure. Member Cavaliere would like to give the Gloucester Heritage Society the opportunity to save the building and raise funds for its repair if they wanted to. Russell K. Gross made a motion to tear down Hawkins Garage; David Piccirillo seconded the motion, but after some discussion Mr. Gross withdrew his original motion.

The Clarkville School house was another matter entirely. That building is sound, and it would not take a lot of money to make it nice. This project would require some landscaping to remove overgrown brush and a couple of trees, the chimney needs repair, the front steps need repair and the building would need painting. Chairman Mitchell will contact Northern Landscape and Rocks Tree Service to see if they can give the Board an estimate for that work to be done; he will report back in August. Getting estimates will determine if the jobs need to be put out to bid. From what he saw at the site visit, Member Piccirillo believes that there is power going to that building. Russell K. Gross made a motion to postpone this agenda item to the August meeting; David Piccirillo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

b. Recording Secretary's meeting salary adjustment: Chairman Mitchell asked Ms. Rix how long she has been the recording secretary for the Land Trust. Ms. Rix stated that she has been the recording clerk for just about seven years now, and she started out at \$145.00 per meeting with a \$5.00 increase in November 2016 when the other town recording clerks received an increase. Russell K. Gross made a motion to raise the pay of the recording clerk to \$175.00 per meeting effective as of the August 2019 meeting; it was seconded by Steven St. Pierre and passed unanimously. Chairman Mitchell will notify the town of the Board's decision.

c. Landscaping maintenance to Hawkins Pond Causeway: Chairman Stephen Mitchell spoke to Sean Condon of Northern Landscape Corporation about cutting the Hawkins Pond causeway again this year.

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The estimated cost was under the \$1,500 limit that would require the job to go out to bid, so the causeway will be cut in July.

d. Hawkins Spillway and Causeway Phase 1I Project Report from Pare Corporation: Chairman Stephen Mitchell would like feedback from each Board Member tonight on how they feel about how to move forward with this project. Chairman Mitchell is also going to set up another meeting with the engineers from Pare Corporation for himself, Attorney Bevilacqua and Vice-Chairman St. Pierre prior to the August meeting. Chairman Mitchell will invite them to present one more time at the August meeting and answer any outstanding questions the Board may have; he will also invite the GLT liaison and the Town Council President to attend the August meeting. Chairman Mitchell asked each member present to share their thoughts; all of the Board Members believe the dam should be repaired to the ½ PMF/Catastrophic level. Many members expressed concern about moving forward with the 500 year level of repair with the project, only to have the state require the higher level of repair anyway and have to spend more money to upgrade what was just done; below are their individual comments:

Roy Najecki: Member Najecki is in favor of repairing the dam to the ½ PMF/Catastrophic level and believes doing the entire project at one time, and not in stages, is a better fiscal strategy. As was done previously, he would like to see if the town DPW could do some of the contracted work to save some money.

Gene Cavaliere: Member Cavaliere indicated that he is in agreement with what Mr. Najecki said and does not want to see the project done in stages. He also asked if any of the Board Members knew of projects the town would be undertaking that may compete for the funds required. The only thing anyone knew of that may be getting funded, was upgrading the town roads which may compete for funds.

David Piccirillo: Member Piccirillo is concerned about how this will be funded and believes the first step is figuring out the funding stream. Attorney Bevilacqua informed him that a project this size would require the town to take out a bond, which would go to the annual meeting to get voted upon by the taxpayers and could be voted down, and then the project would be stuck.

Russell K. Gross: Member Gross's biggest concern about moving forward is with approving the 500 year level of repair, only to have the state require the higher level of repair anyway and then have to spend more money to upgrade what was just done. Connecticut and Massachusetts have already adopted the ½ PMF level requirements, so it is likely that is what Rhode Island will do as well. He also asked if the project would be subject to prevailing wages, and Attorney Bevilacqua stated that yes it would because state regulations and the issuance of a bond would require it.

Steven St. Pierre: Vice-Chairman St. Pierre believes repairing the dam to the ½ PMF/Catastrophic level is the only way to go; need to get these repairs done right the first time. His concern is the same as Member Gross that once the original repair is done, the state will impose a higher standard of requirements and the Board will have to spend more money on a project that was just completed. He likened it to being forced to purchase a Cadillac when you only have a budget to purchase a Toyota. Member St. Pierre is also not convinced the Board will get support for this project from the Town Council. It is a lot of money to repair something that many Glocester residents probably don't even know exists; would be a different story if it was located in the center of town. The state has spent a lot of money on other dams in the area that would have a significant impact on the health and safety of RI citizens if those dams failed, and this dam is even closer to a state road than some of those.

Stephen Mitchell: Chairman Mitchell believes repairing the dam to the ½ PMF/Catastrophic level doing the entire project at one time is the way to proceed, because he shares the same concerns as the other trustees that the state will impose higher standards after the project is completed. Chairman Mitchell and the Board have taken actions so far on this project that are completely in line with the Board's mission. Safety is the top priority for the residents and visitors of this town, and he would rather be ahead of the

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curve than behind it. If the town does not want to support the project, then he still feels good about the steps the Board has taken so far; he believes they have done their due diligence to repair the dam and prevent a catastrophic event. Chairman Mitchell will invite the engineers from Pare back to the August meeting to present their report a final time to the Board and he will also invite the GLT liaison and the Town Council President to that meeting as well. At that meeting it will vote on what direction to take this project, and then Chairman Mitchell will reach out to the Town Council to set up a meeting to discuss this with all of the Town Council members.

Legal Counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr. pointed out that the residents of Gloucester own the liability of an unsafe dam, and the Town Council should recognize this and get behind the repairs. The Land trust does not have enough insurance coverage to handle the dam failing, and they have a \$5 million dollar policy. Not repairing the dam would put the economic stability of the town at risk. This is where politics and legislative leadership could aid in moving this project forward. The legislative leadership should be trying to garner support for the project and could try to get grant funds to help pay for it. Those legislative representatives should be serving the people, doing everything they can to minimize the town's cost for this project, while also protecting their constituent's health and safety. The more support these repairs have in the community, the more likely the residents will pass the bond. These repairs have been mandated by the state and are necessary to avoid a catastrophic flooding event in the future; this project should not be ignored or dismissed. Something has to be done.

e. July 2019 Meeting Cancellation: Chairman Stephen Mitchell would like to cancel the last June meeting and the two July meetings so the trustees can take vacations. The next scheduled Land Trust meeting will take place on August 13, 2019, and will be a workshop meeting. The meeting on August 27th will be the regular meeting for the Board and the September 10th meeting will also have to be moved to September 17th due to a conflict of schedules. Russell K. Gross made a motion to cancel all remaining meetings for June and July and have August 13, 2019 be the next scheduled meeting; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.

Correspondence

a. Marie Singer "Wellintel in June" (05/29/2019): Chairman Mitchell sent the members a lengthy attachment regarding this.

b. Amy Mayer URI Trail Camera Survey (06/05/2019): Chairman Mitchell gave Ms. Mayer permission to conduct this survey again this year.

Trail Inspection and Volunteer Hour(s) Reports: Trail inspections at Steere Hill are complete, and Roy NajECKi and Gene Cavaliere are working on completing the inspections at Sprague.

Monthly GLT Activities/Reports: Nothing to report at this time.

Open Forum: No one present wished to speak.

Executive Session: There was no executive session held at the meeting this evening.

There being no further business before the Land Trust, Steven St. Pierre made a motion to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.

Minutes Approved: August 21, 2019 Meeting.