

GLOCESTER LAND TRUST  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
February 4, 2020

The workshop meeting of the Gloucester Land Trust took place on February 4, 2020 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, James Giarrusso, Roy Najecki, David Piccirillo, Janine Pitocco and Legal Counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr.

Members Absent: Steven St. Pierre

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.. Roy Najecki made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 14, 2020 meeting; it was seconded by Janine Pitocco and passed unanimously.

**Approval of Bills** (discussions and /or action):

- a. Janine Pitocco made a motion to pay Judi Rix a total of \$203.00 for January 14, 2020 Minutes; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.
- b. Janine Pitocco made a motion to pay John J. Bevilacqua, Sr. a total of \$1,000.00 for Legal Services for February 4, 2020 meeting; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.
- c. Janine Pitocco made a motion to pay a total of \$55.00 for the registration cost to the Land & Water Summit for Gene Cavaliere; it was seconded by David Piccirillo and passed unanimously.
- d. Roy Najecki made a motion to pay Pinewood Pub & Pizza a total of \$390.00 for a thank you luncheon to the Town DPW staff for all their help recently; it was seconded by James Giarrusso and passed unanimously.

**New Business** (discussion and/or action):

- a. Procedures for Volunteers and Protection and Liability for GLT/Trustees: Chairman Mitchell had asked the trustees to provide him with feedback/comments on the draft document by Friday, January 17, 2020 and did not hear from anyone. The documentation is primarily for the Board's Trustees to outline how volunteers will be contacted, what the scope of work will be that they can perform and who will oversee them while that work is being conducted. Member Giarrusso would like for the volunteers to help with trail inspections and trail maintenance and limit their use to non-powered equipment like loppers. To limit the Board's liability, volunteers would not even be allowed to use their own power equipment.

The Board has the authority to make an exception for allowing volunteers to use power tools if they are licensed and insured to use such equipment on certain jobs. The example given was that if a person works for a tree cutting company, the Board can make the determination if they will be

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allowed to use a chainsaw on a project. That determination would be made in advance of the work that is being scheduled.

The exact wording of the document will need to be crafted carefully. Volunteers must be under the authority of a GLT Trustee while working on a project on GLT property. The policy can be revisited when the Board reaches the point where volunteers would be working on bigger projects; right now, it is just trail inspections and trail maintenance. Chairman Mitchell will update the document with tonight's suggestions and provide a copy to the Trustees for review at the next meeting.

- b. Legal role of Gloucester Land Trust: Chairman Mitchell provided the Board with a copy of the enabling legislation that created and empowered the Land Trust. Legal Counsel John J. Bevilacqua, Sr. wanted to point out that the State of Rhode Island enabled this Board to exist in 1987 with the "Act Relating to the Preservation of Farm Land and Open Space in the Town of Gloucester and Establishing a Land Trust", not the Town of Gloucester or the Town Council. It is an agricultural/horticultural Board which makes it special. The Town Council appoints and removes trustees and they approve the policies and regulations that the Board puts forward, but other than that the Board is autonomous. In May of 2012 that act was amended to clarify who should be appointed and what the length of their appointment terms should be.

Member Piccirillo had a question regarding the sale of GLT property; he did not know that the Board could sell any of the properties. Attorney Bevilacqua said that the Board could sell a property, but it would have to be because it no longer served its intent, not just to sell for a profit. There would have to either be a special financial town meeting to approve the sale of the property, or it could be handled at the town's annual financial meeting. Member Pitocco asked if the Board had an obligation to develop the properties, like create trails where none exist. Attorney Bevilacqua stated that the Board is not under any obligation to do such work and the management plan for each property determines how the property is used.

- c. Gloucester Land Trust Website: The website was recently infected with a virus out of China and almost destroyed; the virus did not reach the root files, so it was salvageable. It was much broader than just our website and according to Dennis Cipriano it was a Chrome issue via Google. There were no ransomware demands and due to the generosity of Mr. Cipriano the cost to the Land Trust to rebuild the site will be minimal. The web developer was able to quarantine all the site data from the back-up, such as articles, forms, photos, etc. He moved all that data over to another server. A rebuild of the site required a new platform (web template) for that data to be entered into which took a significant amount of time and work. After the website was repaired, Google required a scan to ensure no other viruses could be detected; a typical scan lasts 3-4 hours, but due to the size of the website the scan took 10-12 hours. As of tonight, the website was back up and ready to run waiting for Google to unlock it.

**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, Janine Pitocco made a motion to adjourn at 7:58p.m.; it was seconded by James Giarrusso and passed unanimously.

**Minutes Approved:** February 11, 2020 meeting.