

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors / Annual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Attending:

Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Bruce Easom, Dan Hager, Tim Palmer, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Preparations for opening ceremony

Townsend Community Access and Media (TCAM) plans to broadcast the ceremony and is buying a battery-powered sound system that we can use.

Peter is getting a podium.

We need 7-8 chairs for the speakers. Bill, Mark, Peter, and Tim will bring some.

U.S. Congresswoman Trahan still plans to attend.

Aimee Dancause of Rock and Roll Gymnastics gave us permission to use their parking lots after 12:30. Between the gym and the rail trail parking lot, we'll have room for about 60 cars.

We'll plan to arrive around 1:00 to set up.

Dan recommends balloons for kids.

We won't require masks as we are outdoors, but Bill will have some available. Peter will mention masks and distancing in his opening talk.

Bill wrote a program handout. Joan will format, add a map, and print 100 copies.

Mike Whittlemore from Arrow Septic will drop off three porta-potties.

An announcement is already posted on the town's electric highway sign. Bruce will put a notice in the Groton Herald. Peter will put one in Talk About Groton, although GrotonFest is on the same day. Bill asked the Fitchburg Sentinel to cover the event.

Update on granite pillar

Bill is working with Townsend Memorial to finalize the layout. He agreed to an extra \$250 charge for additional text if they install by the 25th.

Joan will call Dig Safe. Dennis from Townsend Memorial has Joan's cell phone number as a contact for installation.

Update on Japanese Knotweed

Dan did a first treatment with herbicide spray. The plants are starting to look sickly but will need another treatment.

Update on Steve Meehan pedestrian bridge

Bruce and Peter met with Dave Paulson and Lauren Glorioso of NHESP to discuss a future rail trail expansion and also the pedestrian bridge. Stan Dillis had a separate meeting scheduled with them about the bridge.

They noted that the bridge will need clearance for downed trees in the river. Peter pointed out that while NHESP is concerned with sensitive habitat, the larger issues will likely come from F&W.

Regarding a future rail trail extension, NHESP's habitat concerns are centered on the south of Bertozzi. Going north, they are also concerned about river crossings. They want the permitting for both extensions to be submitted at the same time.

They will send meeting notes and have an internal meeting among staff. Bruce suggests we prepare a series of photos along the proposed project area.

Update on trash barrels

Gary emptied the barrel near the parking lot. He had been emptying the other two barrels but overlooked the third. Bill brought up the subject of Carry In Carry Out, but Gary still wants to maintain the barrels.

Signage

Bill and Joan installed a "No Left Turn" sign at the parking lot exit.

Bill made signs asking people to pick up after their dogs and horses.

Joan ordered signs to alert trail users of hunters and recommend "Stay on trail - orange hats - orange dog vests."

Sterilite fence

Sterilite expanded their parking lot onto the adjacent property and will have a lot more space for trucks.

Gary said Max13 will repair/replace the damaged rail trail fence, but not until in time for the opening ceremony. Gary will straighten it out temporarily.

Ideas for planting trees

We discussed the need for trees between the rail trail and the storage units. Dan recommends "October Glory" red maples, which are drought tolerant and fast growing. His company buys from Millican Nurseries in New Hampshire.

Joan favors starting slowly with a six small trees. Dan will get prices, but estimates that trees in ten gallon pots might cost ~\$150 each.

Other maintenance items

Joan and Paul Sebring plan to remove the hunter's tree stand. Bill Biswanger said he could use it for a raffle prize. Tim suggested we notify the Environmental Police that we're taking it down.

The trail surface sill looks great, even after very

wet weather. Bill weed whacked the edges and tried to blow some organic material off the surface. He will ask Colleen Abrams what Wachusett Greenways does to prevent plant growth from encroaching onto the stone dust.

Bill wants to use the ties from Crosswinds to replace the deteriorated ones at the historic railroad display. Paul Sebring still plans to cut the rails at Crosswinds and haul them to MJS Metals for salvage. Peter will contact the fire chief to find out if we need a hot work permit.

Dan noticed some dead trees that we should address, possibly this winter. Bruce asked if we should inform the Townsend Conservation Agent. Tim suggested we introduce ourselves to the new Agent.

Fundraising

Peter, Bill, and Joan had a Zoom meeting with MA Senator Cronin to discuss fundraising. He said we might have a chance at local community earmarked funding, possibly \$20-30K for MassTrails grant matches, but it might be 12 months from now. He highly encourages us to pursue a regional trail network, which might be federally funded at a much higher level, and suggests we contact Congresswoman Trahan.

A grant decision from Community Foundation is expected by October 1.

Financial report

A motion to reimburse Bill \$194.97 for signs was seconded and passed unanimously.

Other events/publicity/outreach

Bill will have a sign-up sheet for our mailing list at the opening ceremony.

Steve Legg wants to work with Boy Scouts on trail improvements from Crosswinds to the Groton line. All were in agreement. Bill asked for photos.

Review minutes

A motion to accept the minutes of our August 25, 2021 meeting was seconded and passed unanimously.

ANNUAL MEETING

The term expires this month for Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, and Joan Wotkowicz. A motion to approve new three-year terms was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion to change Tim Palmer's term from May to September was seconded and passed unanimously.

The new terms for our Board of Directors are:

Director	Term Expires
Dan Hager	September 2022
Bill Rideout	September 2022
Rick Bailey	November 2022
Pete Carson	September 2023
Bruce Easom	September 2023
Ray Jackson	September 2023
Tim Palmer	September 2024
Mark Cram	September 2024
Peter Cunningham	September 2024
Joan Wotkowicz	September 2024

Officers are eligible for re-election for a one-year term. A motion to approve the slate of officers was seconded and passed unanimously.

Officers	
President	Peter Cunningham
Vice President	Pete Carson
Treasurer	Bill Rideout
Clerk	Joan Wotkowicz

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on **Wednesday, October 20, 2021** at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz , Clerk

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.