

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Attending:

Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Bruce Easom, Ray Jackson, Tim Palmer, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Construction updates

James now has a crew working with him. They repaired culverts and built up the sand base over most of the trail section. They are adding rock fill to build up the wet area near Old Meetinghouse Road, where ledge under the surface interferes with drainage. They still need to add about six more inches of sand base before applying stone dust.

They already groomed much of the soil along the shoulders and put down hay bales around the Harbor Pond canoe launch.

Dave Paulson of NHESP approved an extended work schedule to April 8 with turtle protection oversight.

Inspection schedule

We need to start turtle watches to comply with the NHESP extension. Inspections should be one full-length walk per day, preferably before 9:00 AM.

We set up a sweep schedule:

Thurs Apr 31 - Bill
Fri May 1 - Bill
Mon Apr 4 - Joan
Tues Apr 5 - Peter
Wed Apr 6 - Bruce
Thurs Apr 7 - Ray
Fri Apr 8 - Joan

If anyone spots a turtle, move it in the direction it was heading. Send photos and GPS coordinates to Bruce and notify James and/or the construction crew. Please record all visits on the

inspection report so we have documentation.

Harbor Pond / Harbor Church projects

Bill and Joan submitted a revised budget to the Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council for the canoe launch project. The new budget has more work around the Harbor Church parking lot, including reinforcing the rail trail base and installing an infiltration ditch. The Council agreed to the revised budget and Bill signed a grant agreement for \$4,000.

Bill and Joan met with Ryan Hayward and Taber Morrell from the Townsend Historical Society to mark out the leach field and determine where to put regrass in the parking lot.

The Historical Society also asked for a wooden fence on both sides of the easement path. Their property includes a small section parallel to the rail trail, which they may use for parking.

We previously had the easement surveyed, but may need the surveyor to return and re-mark the boundaries with the abutter. Bill will get a price from David Ross. We discussed sending the abutter a letter that points out the surveyed boundary and gives him an opportunity to hire his own surveyor.

Townsend Orders of Conditions

The Townsend Conservation Commission approved our OOC amendment for the Harbor Pond projects. Joan noted that our amendment filing cost was \$420. She voiced concern about the cost to Conservation Agent Jessica Consolvo, especially since we expect to file more requests for amendment and extension.

The Commission is considering revising their new pricing structure with a provision for non-profits. We may be able to appeal for a credit the next time we submit an application.

Our Townsend OOC is valid to July 24, 2022. Bruce suggested we request the extension at least two months in advance. Joan will submit the paperwork.

Historical Society request for bridge repair

During the on-site visit with the Townsend Historical Society, Bill and Joan also reviewed their proposed plans for repairing the railroad bridge nearest the Cooperage. We already have an OOC amendment, so they would like us to partner with them on the permitting.

Joan asked Jessica Consolvo if this project can be an additional amendment to our OOC, since we already have an amendment for the Grist Mill bridge. Both projects are for a similar purpose, which is to facilitate a walking tour of the historic properties.

Requests for abutter fencing

Bill estimates about 100 feet of fence for the abutter a few houses west of Harbor Auto. We will discuss options with them, such as wood fence, hedge, or other vegetation to be installed after construction is finished.

Meehan bridge project

Stan Dillis said part of Old Meetinghouse Road is in a federal flood plain, so the project is unlikely to move forward unless the Town of Townsend takes the lead on using the town road for emergency access.

Bill reached out to Veronica Kell, who is supportive. Bill will ask the police and fire chiefs for letters of support to bring to the Select Board.

Townsend Shared Streets projects

Bill helped write a 2022 MA DOT Shared Streets grant application for sidewalks in the Harbor. We should hear around April 15 if Townsend is awarded funding.

As part of the 2021 Shared Street grant award, Townsend purchased a bench, bike rack, and

repair stand for Depot Street. Joan gave the Cemetery and Parks Department our layout sketch for installation.

Status of ARPA funding

Money was direct deposited in our bank account. Bill will pay Gary the \$100K at the end of construction.

Status of grant applications

We received half of our grant award from the Wild & Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council.

No news yet on our other grant applications.

Congresswoman Lori Trahan sent Peter an email about Community Project Funding requests. The deadline for submissions is Monday April 11, 2022. Peter will fill out the electronic form.

Townsend Earth Day/tree planting

Bill will prepare an email announcement for a tree planting event, starting on Depot Street at 9:00 AM on Saturday, April 23.

Cheryl's idea is to have people "adopt" a tree that they plant, so they take ownership of watering, etc.

Joan will ask the Townsend Highway Dept. for permission to dig white pine transplants from along their driveway.

Other events/publicity/outreach

We will host a trail opening event for the Old Meetinghouse Road to Harbor Church section, with more focus on funders. We will invite candidates for the upcoming election.

Bill will ask Joe Shank if we can host a barbeque for abutters near his shop.

Joan reported one of our NO ATV signs blew away over the winter. She purchased two more.

The URL squannacookriverrailtrail.org no longer works (unless we want to pay ransom to a domain pirate). Going forward, please remember to use sqgw.org or squannacookgreenways.org

or **sqrirt.org** on all promotional materials. We still turn up on Google searches.

Financial report

A motion to submit our IRS form 990 as prepared by Bill was seconded and approved unanimously.

Directors are reminded to fill out a Conflict of Interest form and return the signed copy to Bill.

Review minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from our meeting on March 2, 2022 was seconded and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on **April 21, 2022** at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom. **Note the switch to Thursday for this meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz

Clerk

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.