

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 30, 2019

Attending:

Peter Carson, Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Dan Hager, Ray Jackson, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Guest: Paul Sebring

Request from Townsend Land Use Department for letter of support

Beth Faxon, Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals Administrator asked us for a letter of support for a Municipality Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) planning grant. We voted to provide the letter, which Joan will write and send.

Addition to Board of Directors

Bill invited Rick Bailey, retiring Townsend Police Chief, to join our board.

Status of MassTrails grant award

Cedwyn sent an email expressing concerns about partially constructing the entire trail this year. Since we applied for the whole 3.7 miles, Amanda said we cannot apply for another construction grant next year.

MassTrails has additional money available this year for construction if we can get estimates. The grant paperwork must be signed by December 31.

We discussed three options:

- Accept the \$27K grant as is.
- Obtain construction estimates and submit a request for additional funding.
- Ask Amanda if we are allowed to defer our grant award and reapply next year.

Bill said another option is to ask for another \$100K, combine this with our present money, and build two miles. Pete Carson reminded us the OOCs will expire after two years (although we could get an extension).

Joan will attend the MassTrails Conference on Saturday and explain to Amanda Lewis that we are at least \$285K short because we assumed the price for the rails would cover the cost of tie disposal. Joan will ask about deferring the grant this year, since the amount we requested was based on our assumption that Iron Horse could remove the rails and ties. We would apply again next year, when we have better bids, to complete a certain number of miles.

If reapplying is not an option, Joan will explain that we have estimates in the range of \$285K to remove rails and ties and \$550K to complete the project. This is the amount we would request for an increase on our award.

Contractor bids to clear trees

We have a bid from the Kings to clear the corridor, although they may need until March to finish. We agreed by consensus to support moving ahead with clearing the corridor. We also decided to move ahead on installing the fence.

Contractor bids to remove ties and rails

Mark obtained a bid of \$285K from McDowell Demolition to remove ties and rails.

Powell estimates \$294K to remove ties and rails and \$550K to do the whole project.

Bill asked Weston/Wayland rail trail about their construction costs. They paid \$500K for removing rails and ties over 4.3 miles.

Joan contacted people from the Mason Rail Trail and the Granite Town Rail Trail in NH to ask about contractors. They all spoke highly of Amos White from the Bentley Management Group in Nashua. Amos reviewed our construction guidelines and does not want to bid due to the scope and timing, but supports our project and would consider future work.

Amos passed out project along to Leighton White Site Work Services of Milford, NH. Dale White called Joan to ask about the project. They will consider bidding.

During last week's volunteer day, Beryl Cram approached Paul Bourgeois of Max13 Construction in Clinton, who happened to be fishing. He reviewed our construction guidelines and called Joan with additional questions. Paul and his boss will walk parts of the trail this Saturday, November 2 during our volunteer work day and will look for members of our team. Joan will give him Mark's and Bill's locations and cell numbers.

Recap of volunteer work day to clear wattle zones

Nearly 40 volunteers worked on Saturday, October 19, from 9:00 to approximately 1:30. We divided into five groups, with one board member supervising each group.

Bill's comprehensive plan worked out very well. People were enthusiastic and delighted to be finally making progress.

Plan for wattles installation

Nick Gualco, Groton Conservation Agent, recommends we trench a little bit where the banks are steep.

When Bill sends an announcement, he'll ask people to bring mattocks, hoes, wheelbarrows, etc.

Any wattles that we don't finish may need to be covered with tarps.

Joan called S&M Farms and ordered 8,470 linear feet of wattles (on pallets of 300 feet each) and 2040 stakes (six stakes per wattle) to be delivered to five locations on Friday, November 1. Bill suggested that Joan accompany the driver to the five locations.

Plan for wetland replication

On hold.

Conservation Commission site reviews

Pete Cunningham and Joan walked the Groton section with Nick Gualco on October 3. He will

look at wattle installation afterward.

Joan spoke with Dave Henkels, Townsend Conservation Agent, who has been reviewing our work. Dave sent an email with recommendations for better wattle placement near Old Meetinghouse Road.

Joan made DEP signs that Mark will hang.

Townsend Stormwater Plan

On hold.

Permitting for parking lots

On hold.

Project timeline

Pete Carson distributed an update.

Fundraising and financial report

More than \$3,000 was donated in Steve's memory. (Steve's family also came to the last volunteer day.)

We have about \$119K and expect \$27K from the MassTrails grant.

Meeting minutes

A motion to accept the corrected minutes from October 2, 2019 was seconded and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on **Wednesday, November 13** at 7:00 P.M. at the Groton Legion.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Wotkowicz, Clerk
Squannacook Greenways, Inc.



**RAIL TRAIL OR
BUST!**