

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2011 at 7:00 pm

Kimball House, Townsend, MA

Attending: Peter Carson, Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Bruce Easom, Al Futterman, Alfred Gadway, Bob Hargraves, Steve Meehan, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz, Hirk Fortin, Ken Gerkin

Election of Officers

Bill Rideout requested that we elect officers so he can submit papers for incorporation. The Board of Directors elected the following officers:

President – Bruce Easom
Vice President – Peter Cunningham
Clerk – Joan Wotkowicz
Treasurer – Bill Rideout

We currently have 11 directors on the Board of Directors. All were present for the election except Ray Jackson and Rollin Willis.

Financial Report

Bill Rideout reported a current balance of approximately \$3,000. He will start a corporate bank account. A motion to authorize spending up to \$35 passed unanimously.

A question was raised about when to purchase insurance to indemnify the board and officers. We agreed to buy insurance prior to signing the contract for the railroad lease.

Bylaws

Steve Meehan pointed out inconsistent use of the terms “board members” and “directors” in Article 5. We decided to remove all use of the word “members” when referring to the Board of Directors, to avoid confusion with members-at-large.

A motion to accept the bylaws as amended passed unanimously with one abstaining. The bylaws will become part of the official meeting record and be posted on our web site.

Articles of Incorporation

A motion to accept the articles as discussed at our previous meeting and reviewed by Gene Rauhala passed unanimously with one abstaining.

Web Site

Bill Rideout noted that we have three URLs:

<http://www.squannacookriverrailtrail.org>
<http://www.squannacookgreenways.org>
<http://www.sqgw.org>

All three point to the same site. A question was asked about clarifying the multiple URLs. Bill replied that he will post an explanation. Bruce Easom noted that “Squannacook Greenways”

refers to the organization that will build and maintain the trail while “Squannacook River Rail Trail” refers to the physical trail.

Meeting with Legislative Representatives

A meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 16 with Rep. Sheila Harrington, Sen. Eileen Donahue, and Sen. Jen Flanagan (or a staff member). Peter Cunningham arranged the meeting after we did not receive a response from DCR Commissioner Ed Lambert. The objective of the meeting is to update the state legislators on our plans and progress and enlist their support in moving along negotiation with DCR. Another objective is to move along the sidewalk project on the Mass Highway TIP list.

Bob Hargaves emphasized the importance of bringing the legislators in.

Meeting with Gary Shepherd

Bill Rideout, Mark Cram, and Joan Wotkowicz met with Gary Shephard on September 9. Gary is a local contractor, rail trail abuttor, and a potential bidder on the construction project. Objectives of the meeting were to ask Gary to consider bidding, to obtain information for our DCR grant application, and to keep the line of communications open.

Bill Rideout reported that Gary was overall positive about doing the project. He said he could complete it in four months, but it would be more efficient to do it all at once. He suggested raising money in town rather than depending on multiple DCR grants.

Gary has removed rails previously for Hollingswoth and Vose, but is new to the process of selling rails. He wondered if we could sell the spikes as souvenirs. Mark Cram reported that an updated quote on steel is higher than the previous.

Bill told Gary that he would be one of multiple bidders, but it would be nice to have a local business.

Cost Estimates for Environmental Permitting

Environmental permitting is the focus of our DCR grant application, so cost estimates are needed. Al Futterman reported that David E. Ross of Ayer provided a rough estimate of \$43,000. Bill Rideout reported that Ann Martin of LEC, who was sub-contractor to FST for our preliminary engineering study, estimated \$40,000 for wetland permitting only.

DCR Recreational Trails Program grant application

Amanda Lewis of DCR suggested to Al Futterman that we submit our application as Squannacook Greenways, on the assumption that we will receive 501c3 status by the time grant money is awarded. In the event the 501c3 is delayed, NRWA has offered to serve as fiscal agent.

Joan Wotkowicz gave the fiscal forms for the grant application to Bill Rideout for processing. A motion authorizing the Squannacook Greenways officers to sign a contract with DCR passed unanimously.

Joan asked for grant application reviewers. Bruce Easom, Steve Meehan, Peter Cunningham, Al Futterman, and Bill Rideout volunteered.

Letters of Support

Bob Hargaves sent a letter of support to DCR Commissioner Lambert and provided a template for us to follow. He also requested a letter of support from Scott Brown.

Bob stressed that letters of support should be individualized. While a template is useful, any repetitive letters are less likely to receive notice.

Bill Rideout plans to send drafts for all of us to use. Copies of any letters received should go to Joan for use in the grant application. We will submit the same letters to Commissioner Lambert.

Illegal Dumping

Mark Cram noted some waste railroad ties recently appeared on the rail bed. Bill Rideout agreed to talk to Town Administrator Andy Sheehan.

Mass Trails Conference

Bill Rideout encouraged us all to attend at the Massachusetts Trails Conference on November 12, 2011 at the Doyle Conservation Center in Leominster. This is entitled “Building Connections” and will be presented by the Massachusetts Recreational Trail Advisory Board (MARTAB) in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Trustees of Reservations, so it will be directly related to the Recreational Trails Program grants. Registration information should be available any day.

Other Conferences

Moving Together – October 12. Bill Rideout and others have attended this annual state-wide bicycling and walking conference in the past. However, it is DOT-centric and we are no longer pursuing a paved trail.

Human Powered Vehicle Festival – September 17 on the Nashua River Rail Trail. Organizer Tim Leonard inquired if Squannacook Greenways would like to have a booth, but no one is available.

Quote of the Evening

“The best enforcers on trails are young mothers with children and cell phones.” – Bob Hargaves

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 26, 2011 at 7 pm at the Nashua River Watershed Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz

Clerk

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