

**HOPKINTON LAND TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**September 25, 2023**

**Crandall House**

**PRESENT:** Sarah Windsor *Chair*, Jason Parent, *Vice-Chair*, Carol Baker, *Secretary*, Mary Gibbons, Alana Russell and Cyndy Johnson *Trustees*. Scott Bill Hirst, Town Council liaison.

**ABSENT:** Marilyn Grant, *Trustee*.

**A. Call meeting to order** at 7:06 by Windsor with 6 trustees, and therefore a quorum, present.

**B. Approval of Previous meeting minutes:** Interim Public minutes for July 24 meeting were reviewed. Johnson made a motion to approve, seconded by Parent, passed unanimously. Minutes of August 28 Public minutes were reviewed, minor corrections were made. Russell made a motion to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Gibbons, passed unanimously. There were no executive minutes in July or August.

**C. Accounting of Funds:** None.

**D. Chair and Member Reports**

1. Chair Report:

Trail planner discussion: Windsor emailed message Marc Doherty, Westerly Land Trust land stewardship coordinator, regarding doing trail work for HLT, hasn't heard back. Also spoke with Kate Sayles, head of RI Land Trust Council, she said many land trusts are in same position, having difficulty finding enough volunteers and members to maintain trails. She's doing some research on issue and will get back to us. Baker also spoke with Suzanne Paton from the Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust, who are also in same position.

2. Funding and Grants: Beaver Flood Trail – RFQ responses

Windsor reported that Thompson spoke with Tuthill who would like to visit the site next Friday with himself Grant, at a time to be determined. Others are welcome to join if possible.

3. Advocacy:

Brushy Brook meeting: Johnson reported at the September 5 Planning Board approved preliminary plan with numerous contingencies. Hirst and many members of the public are upset with decision and want to appeal. Unclear if this is legally possible. Hirst will speak further with the Town lawyer.

Skunk Hill property Solar project: Was discussed at Sept 20 Planning Board meeting, members had many comments and questions for the developer lawyer, Bob Craven, who will respond at next meeting on Oct 18.

4. Friends/HLT:

- Pelloni – Map was sent to Friends and on to Gina Fuller who is having technical formatting difficulties.
- Land Trust Days : Saturday, September 30, at Crown Farm, rain date, October 1, 10 AM. Russell has volunteered to do a forest health walk and talk. Registration link on Friends site. Russell and Grant walked south Route, then Russell and husband returned and brush hogged, looks great. Also cleared north loop of snapped beech trees. Rob Swanson will be providing (paid for by Friends) homemade cider and donuts at the event.

- Spring Event: Brainstorm Ideas – Event should be before bond referendum vote in June to keep fresh in public’s mind. Discussion centered around which property, several specific venues were discussed include another speaker, have refreshments. Baker suggested speaker from RI Natural History Survey, Russell knows director and will touch base.

*Hirst leaves at 8:00 pm.*

5. **Land Management and Stewardship**

Depot Square Spur Trail: Johnson reported that DJ McGouran finished lower trail. Thank you notes were sent to McGouran and his partner Tony Turano. Johnson spoke with police Capt Carrier who said they’re trying to locate owner of paddleboat, if not, it is abandoned property on Town owned land property, DPS can pick it up and carry it away. Presence of paddleboat on shore is denigrating streamside wetland. Russell spoke to Casey Merkel from WPWA Wild and Scenic regarding extending restoration plan grant, who approved extension until June 2024.

Kenyon Crossroads fence repair: No update.

Russ Tuthill: Thompson reached out to Tuthill, he is interested in Beaver flood trail and other trail maintenance projects (see further info under Funding and Grants).

**E. Old Business:**

Bond Discussion: We reviewed updated powerpoint from Parent, analyzing cost of purchasing open space vs housing lots on same properties. The presentation demonstrated that housing lots cost more than open space, using numbers from Hopkinton budget document. Additional changes were discussed, Parent will update and make available on Google Docs for all to review. Next step is for **Land Trust Members** to meet with Town manager and Finance Director in next several weeks to discuss and review info and confirm numbers.

**F. New Business:** Michael Cervieri emailed new website ideas, very general, overall consensus was positive. We will all look at it in more detail and be ready to discuss in more detail at next meeting.

**G. Public Forum / Trustees Forum:** None

**H. Executive Session:** None

**I. Adjourn: 8:55 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Baker, Secretary