

Friends of Goodwin Forest

Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2023 in person and on Google Meeting

Present: in person: President Jim Giana, Treasurer Bruce Spaman, Recording Secretary Linda Wenner, Beth Bernard, Adam Drouin, Beth Merow, Lynne Warren, Gabe Zorabedian, Bill Marshall, Glen Newcombe, Emily Logee Savoie, Stan Crawford, Lynn Kochiss and on Google Meet Robert Mazzawy.

The meeting was called to order by Jim at 1:04 PM. The minutes of September 12, 2023 were accepted as presented on the webpage.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce Spaman reported that compared to 2022, income this year was lower – program fees were lower and there was no plant sale income. The reported income for Master Naturalist is incorrect (full enrollment of 25 paid) due to slow/late reporting from CFPA. However, our expense total is \$12,284 which is less than income of \$16,046 so we are solvent. Bill expressed disappointment with CFPA's lack of accurate information. Beth B. will set up a meeting with Bruce and CFPA staff to address this. Budget for next year will not include plant sale income as jumping worms will quickly get into the plants we purchase for sale. Money was not spent on building maintenance this year as Matt Quinn supplied the maintainers with materials. Motion to accept the Treasurer's report by Lynne W., seconded by Bill, report accepted.

Membership Report: Jim said he got the membership information in a different format that only shows paid members. There was one new renewal. The report showed 22 Friends only and 192 Friends and CFPA dual members. There are 240 paid members. Gabe asked about pamphlets to hand out to people he meets on the trails. Beth said there are brochures available. The QR code works for donations and membership. Emily made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Bob, report was accepted.

Social Media: Lynne W. said the newsletter is very popular.

Garden Report: Lynne W. said the jumping worms have been here at Goodwin a very long time. She has a photo from 2012 of a frog wrestling with a jumping worm. Climate change is having an impact on their exponential population growth. Right now the only techniques to get rid of them are to catch and kill as many juveniles as possible in the spring before they are old enough to reproduce, or to solarize in the fall. Because the adult worms die in the cold, solarizing an area to get the temperature above 50 degrees will cause the eggs to hatch and then they can't survive the winter temperatures. Bill made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Emily, report accepted. Lynne asked if the tractor was back from repairs and it is not. Linda offered her tractor for any projects in the meantime.

CFPA: Beth said that a new Executive Director should be starting in mid-January.

Director's Report: Beth showed us the poetry workshop's book with the Friends of Goodwin on page 109 and the poetry of the Windham Middle Schoolers featured. "Writing the Land: Channels" is available for a \$10 donation. Beth thanked Jim and Lynne for representing FOG at the CFPA Volunteer Recognition event. About 600 children came to Goodwin for outdoor education this fall and she hopes to have as many or more in the spring semester. Beth reviewed the PSA process at Gabe's request. Bruce made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Emily, report accepted.

Education Report: Adam said that the change in weather has resulted in a slow down for the home schoolers. Bruce explained that the large home school population in Hampton is due to the Mennonite community, with 12 families homeschooling. Tracking with Robin was very popular and will probably do another in December. The budget is usually ok but does not have enough to bring in the 3 Foragers, who

charge \$250 for a program. We agreed to increase the “other programs” budget line for 2024 so we can have them do a program as they are very popular. Adam has had master naturalists come do programs and he would like them to be included in the Volunteer Recognition. Bill asked if we have had to turn people away from events. Adam said he keeps a wait list and it has not been a big problem so far. However, the education center museum is too small for many events.

Beth M. said she oversees the Master Naturalist program. Last year the program was totally revamped to one Saturday per month for 12 months. Two of the meetings are here and the rest are travelling around the state to different habitats (Session Woods, Hammonasset, Keney Park in Hartford, Belding in Vernon, Windsor, Ragged Mountain in Berlin, Sharon Audubon, 8 Mile Scenic River) with 9 expert guest instructors. Many instructors volunteer but some are paid. In 2023 there were 62 applicants for 25 spots and a wait list of 10 was kept. The wait-listers were given priority for 2024 and 5 have already accepted. 15 new applications have already been received. There were 5 partial scholarships last year. Next cohort will begin in March. They will get 85 hours of instruction (in-person and on-line) and a \$28 text book which is a bargain at \$315. Beth M. suggested upping the fee to \$375. Beth B. suggested the fee should be \$400. Word about our great program has spread and we are getting applicants from as far away as Fairfield County. Stan suggested inviting the Master Naturalists to the Trail Run as docents. That would one opportunity for students to get some of their mandatory 30 hours of community service. Linda made a motion to increase the Master Naturalist fee to \$400, seconded by Glen, motion passed.

Trails: Gabe reported that there was a good turnout for the workday on 10/27. The day before, Stan sealed the benches in the Haley garden, the six benches at the campsite, the Fran Zumpano memorial benches, and the picnic table and the work bench by the gardener’s shed. Stan also made time to do brush cutting on Cedar Swamp and the Governor’s Island causeway. Dave Raczkowski, Dale May, Glen, Bill and Gabe sealed the Governor’s Island overlook platform and repaired the ramp in just a few hours. Linda mowed the trails for one last cleanup. Lori Brant told Gabe she has restarted the kiosk map ordering process and Gabe will follow up with her about the progress on this. Future trail work that is planned includes repairs to the washout on the R/W trail by fixing the grade to divert water before it reaches the damaged water-bar area. Volunteers will be receiving a notification about a workday for this soon. Gabe marked the lower R/W with ribbon tape in October while studying the paths of significant water currents that were still flowing a few days after a rainfall. The little bridge that was installed last year has worked very well in a similar situation. The Plexiglas on Kiosk #9 at the Blue and Orange intersection near the old cellar holes needs replacement. This will be done when the new maps have been received. Bruce mentioned that beavers have been busy on the Blue/White. Beth M. showed a picture of fresh beaver work by the dam. Glen made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Bill, report accepted.

Little Library: Lynn K. reported that the Little Library has been very popular with over 100 books taken since Spring 2022. Toddler board books and field guides are most popular. She requested that she be reimbursed for the books she purchases for the Little Library. She gets most of the books at sales where it is \$5 or \$10 for a “bag of books.” She asked that \$200 be added to the 2023 budget to support the Library. She will send Lynne W. an ad for the newsletter soliciting donations of books. Nature books for adults are hard to find used. Monetary donations for the library could be made at the gazebo cash box or by QR code. Lynne W. made a motion to include \$200 in the 2024 budget to support the Little Library, seconded by Bill, motion passed unanimously.

5 Year Plan: Lynne W. said the meeting minutes of the committee are on-line. 2024 plan is to push for a director along with Kellogg and Meigs. She would like to get permission for Docents to open buildings in

the future if DEEP approves. Do Forestry staff count as staff to open buildings? They would like to make the museum a Welcome Center staffed by Docents. She suggested a reduced fee for members for programs/speakers. Non-profit status is on hold until the new CFPA executive director is on board. Motion to accept the report by Stan, seconded by Glenn, report accepted.

Socializing: Lynne W. suggested a date of January 12 with January 19 as a snow date. There would be a brief business meeting at 5 PM to approve a budget and hold elections. This would be for Friends and Volunteer Recognition only. Followed by a potluck with Jim to bring beverages. Lynne W. asked if there was a budget for volunteer recognition awards. Beth M. said CFPA could contribute \$200 for awards. Lynne W. made a motion to add \$400 to budget for Volunteer Recognition awards, seconded by Glen and Bill, motion passed.

Forestry Day: Beth said planning is underway for April 20 from 10 AM to 1 PM. Will include start to finish of the lumber process, from growing, harvesting and processing. Bruce said it is possible the UConn Woodsmen Team will do a demonstration of skills. Lynn K. suggested doing “tree cookie” giveaways for the kids, and she will do the carbon tree chart which calculates how much carbon a tree can store. For example a 16 inch circumference tree stores carbon equal to a jet flying from Seattle to Orlando.

Friends of State Parks: Jim asked if we were members of the Friends of State Parks. Lynne W. said we were members back in 2010 when we started. Bill and Bruce don’t ever remember paying the dues. Stan made a motion to include the \$50 dues in the budget, seconded by Lynne W. and Glen, motion passed.

Nominations for Election: Lynne Warren was nominated for President, Lynn Kochiss was nominated for Vice President, Bruce Spaman was nominated for Treasurer and Linda Wenner was nominated for Secretary.

Other Business: Bruce mentioned that State Representative Pat Boyd will be at Hampton Town Hall Thursday, 11/16 at 5:30 to hear from constituents. Pat built our gazebo as an Eagle Scout project years ago.

Motion to adjourn by Lynne, and the meeting adjourned at 2:48 PM.

Next meeting is January 12, 2024 (with a snow date of 1/19) at 5 PM at Goodwin, followed by a potluck and Volunteer Recognition awards.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Wenner.