

Friends of Goodwin Forest

Meeting Minutes of March 7, 2024 on Google Meeting

Present: President Lynne Warren, Vice President Lynn Kochiss, Secretary Linda Wenner, Jim Giana, Bill Marshall, Stan Crawford, Steve Broderick, Dale May, Kate May and Gabe Zorabedian.

Lynne called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Motion to accept the minutes of 2/22/24 by Steve, second by Jim, approved.

No Treasurer's report.

Goodwin Center Lynne reported that Adam Drouin will be hired by Lori Grandt as a seasonal DEEP employee under No Child Left Inside program and his direct supervisor will be Kristen Bellantuono. His hours are not set yet but Lori will let Lynne know what they are. Chelsea Knyff will have seasonal hours Thursday and Saturday from 9 to 4. She is an archivist and collections curator. Lynne has submitted a Request for Information to the Office of Industry and Outdoor Experiences asking for use of the external museum. The proposal is that FGF would operate a welcome center and offer programs through our volunteer base. See Lynne's proposal for Goodwin on our website under Minutes.

Membership Lynn said she is trying to find an accurate list for 2024 membership. The renewal appeal letter went out on 3/3/24. Some have chosen paperless renewal – Stan and Linda with Linda being automatic. Lynn will send out the thank you notes as soon as she gets accurate email addresses.

CFPA Lynne and Lynn met with the new director Andy Bicking. Andy met with DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes and director Tom Tyler but Lori was not invited to that meeting. No contract with the educator to date. CFPA has been working on a position for a contract educator. Lynne is meeting with Lori on the 29th. We will need to be IRS 501(c)3 by the end of 2024. Lynne and Lynn have been exploring the paperwork and since we don't raise a lot of funds, we can do an EZ form. Andy has offered to help us but we may be able to do it within our membership. Meanwhile, we are working with CFPA office staff to ensure a smooth transition. There may be more work involved for the officers and if anyone does not wish to continue, let Lynne know as soon as possible.

Lynn and Steve met with Last Green Valley (LGV) and Lori. Lori had been told to shut Goodwin down but she said no and has interest in pursuing alternatives for keeping Goodwin open, which was very encouraging. There is potential to make Goodwin stronger by partnering with LGV and CFPA with us as a non-profit. Steve said he feels Lori and Matt Quinn are both strong advocates for Goodwin and without them, Goodwin would be shut down. LGV is powerful and very helpful. Lynn felt seeing Lori at the meeting showed how committed she is to Goodwin. Steve said Lori has a very difficult job and she is doing the very best she can for Goodwin. Jim said Friends of State Parks would be helpful too and he will send Lynne the contact name.

Trail Run Bill said planning is in full swing. June 2nd is the date for both 5K and 30K. He is hoping registrations will match last year. He has not heard from Lori about availability of staffing nor use of the facility. Volunteers needed, please contact Bill to volunteer!

Trails Gabe said maintenance has been completed and gave thanks to all the volunteers who helped keep up with blowdowns this winter. There are still more to clear as they keep falling, but we have made great progress. Thanks to Dave Raczkowski for donating and constructing the bog bridge at Black Spruce Pond. The pond has breached the dam because of debris in the drainage system. Most level trails have

puddling and mud as the ground is completely saturated. The new dam at Pine Acres Pond is working well. Andrew May, who sits on the Conservation Committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club, CT Chapter, has once again reached out to FGF Trails to see if we have any projects the ECSU students could work on for their Community Engagement Program. Last year, Gabe identified some areas on the Lower R/W trail that stay wet most of the year. The areas where water crosses the trail were identified with red tape. The plan is to put 3 small foot bridges over trenched areas to keep the trail usable. Andrew agrees this would be perfect for the students to work on. The proposed date is Saturday, April 20th. If approved by ECSU, we would have the students from 9:15 to 11:45 AM to complete their volunteer efforts. An email will go out to all FGF Trail volunteers to join, so that we could complete the entire project in one day. We have plenty of two inch oak boards remaining for this project. Gabe will talk with Matt Quinn about getting the existing pile of processed gravel dumped at the Red Trail near Grand Junction. This section needs to be crowned for proper drainage. The water bars have failed with every strong rainfall. We will likely build a small foot bridge over the area where storm water flows across the trail. An email will be sent to volunteers with a date for this work. Dave Raczkowski pointed out that gravel is needed in the Estabrooks parking area to keep cars from getting stuck and Gabe will ask Matt to move gravel there. Another concern is maintenance of the deteriorated Charcoal Mound display. Who can we contact about that? Lance was the intern that created it, but he no longer works for the state. Lynn will send Gabe his current contact information. Gabe notified Matt that both Brown Hill Marsh and Black Spruce Pond are not draining well. Stan suggested that the Estabrook Road trailhead could be taken care of by the Hampton town crew. Stan mentioned that resurfacing of the Airline Trail has begun on the Hampton to Pomfret section. Gabe said the crew has done a good job keeping the trail clean.

Garden Lynne will be setting up one workday per weekend with the schedule to be announced in April. With the help of Robert Massawy and Claire Kane, Lynne has applied for a RTP grant to install a universal access trail in the garden.

Forestry Day will be in the fall to coordinate with Goodwin's 50th anniversary.

Bill asked if when we are 501(c)3 will our financials still be under CFPA? Lynne said we will wait until we are non-profit and then sort everything out to separate from CFPA, possibly in September.

Stan asked if there was a FOG Friday night social gathering on the schedule? Lynne said probably not until we get access to the museum for a welcome center. She anticipates June at the earliest.

Stan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Steve, adjourned.

Next meeting May 9, 2024 at 1 PM at Goodwin and on line.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Wenner.