

Friends of Goodwin Forest

Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2024 at Goodwin

Present: President Lynne Warren, Vice President Lynn Kochiss, Secretary Linda Wenner, Treasurer David Fowler, Bill Marshall, Stan Crawford, Glen Newcombe, Chelsey Knyff, Matthew Quinn, Emily Logee Savoie, Kate May, Adam Drouin.

Lynne W. called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.

Motion to accept the minutes of 3/7/24 by Lynn K., second by Stan, approved.

No Treasurer's report as CFPA is still in transition.

Non-profit Status: Lynne W. reported that CFPA wants us to be our own non-profit since they do not have the staff to handle our financials. We will form a corporation with the state, then file for 501(c)3 status with the IRS. We will open our own bank account. Lynne's husband is covering the costs for the lawyer and accountant. The process may take up to a year.

The 2nd endowment for the scholarship was handled by CFPA in the past but may now be passed to us. This will depend on the paperwork. The scholarship has not been awarded lately.

DEEP: Matt said they are still waiting on contractors for roofing the museum and garage. Final siding phase is in the works. Roof and gutters will come after the siding is finished. The cleaning service is up for new contract. Jerry is working here and has a helper some days. Floors will be waxed in the meeting room. Lynne W. said the Friends need a combination door lock in the building so we can access the bathrooms when doing programs. She has also received no response to her proposal to use the Museum as a Welcome Center and Last Green Valley (LGV) has a proposal in also. No State action has been taken on these proposals. DEEP has been hit hard with the retirement of Tom Tyler. Chelsey was introduced as our seasonal and as Adam's supervisor. Adam has been here two months and has not yet received a paycheck from the State.

Membership: Lynn K. thinks this is the last year that CFPA will be handling membership. We are on our own for 2025. March 1 renewals went out snail mail and email. 160 total renewals went out of which 43 are Friends only and 117 Dual Friends and CFPA. After renewal less than 50% were renewed: 78 paid with 16 Friends and 62 Dual. Lynn advised us to renew as Friends only if you are uncomfortable with the CFPA situation, rather than not renewing at all. We are counting on FGF memberships during this transition time. Lynn will provide renewal forms for the trail run.

DEEP Listserv: Adam said the DEEP listserv is inaccessible as Beth's email expired and that was the only way to access it. Adam has not made any progress getting new access. DEEP has control over the listserve and not CFPA or Forests and Parks.

DEEP Hiring: Hiring for a DEEP position that will cover state-wide but include Goodwin is in process. Beth Merow is probably leaving to go to LGV, however she is still interested in doing the Master Naturalist program. A start date for Master Naturalist is still unknown. If we choose to totally sponsor Master Naturalist, it will go over budget. The program is very popular with over 75 people on the waiting list. Currently the class size is 25 at \$400 each. It would be possible to take the program state-wide in future years. Motion by Kate to hire Beth Merow as Master Naturalist Coordinator, second by Stan. Discussion: it is our biggest budget item and the best way to promote all our Friends of Goodwin Forest programs. All were in favor, motion passed.

Trail Run Bill said the Run is June 2nd and planning meetings are now weekly. As of today 110 registered, which is the same as last year at this time. \$340 has been contributed to the Friends in addition to the registration fees. 51 bought t-shirts. Access is needed to the building to store food and equipment several days prior to the run. Matt has okayed that several runners are camping here the night before. Matt will be campsite supervisor (which Beth did previously). Stan will get 12-15 safety cones from Hampton Public Works and also notify Chaplin and Eastford Fire Departments. Stan said a new bench has been carved on a blowdown on the peak of the yellow trail which is on the 10K loop. Perfect spot for a selfie photo for the runners.

Forestry Day will be in the fall to coordinate with Goodwin's 60th anniversary. Some instructors were not notified that the date had changed from April to the fall. We will partner with Last Green Valley on September 28th. Stan suggested featuring Alan Freeman's Hip Camp on Old Town Pound Road as a success story. Alan has removed all invasives from his 45 acre forest, which is an easy hike from Goodwin (via the white trail).

Trails: Glen read Gabe's report. ECSU students were at Goodwin on 4/20 for trail maintenance. Because of the wet weather conditions, the B/R was cleaned up on both sides of Potter Rd. There were 7 students plus Andrew May of AMC and Bob Andrews of CFPA. There was a trail work party on 5/4 with Bob M., Linda, Glen and Dave R. and Gabe. Dave R. cleared blowdowns on Governor's Island and the B/W. Linda, Glen and Gabe cleared two blowdowns on lower R/W. Attendees de-bermed the washout area of R/W at Grand Junction and filled in the washout ruts. Linda used her loader to save time and lots of back aches. Bob and Glen hand dug drainage ditches on the lower R/W. These made a quick and positive impact on the water/mud issue. Stan and Susan cleared a section of the Natchaug Trail around Pine Acres Pond and also cleared/cut back "Cody's Trail." Excellent progress was made on the work day. Dave and Glen have been keeping up on the northern portion of the forest. This is also helpful for our annual Trail Run. Dave has done lots of work in the Natchaug Forest to further support the run.

Planned work: Matt has offered to take the DEEP backhoe down to the lower R/W to dig larger drainage ditches to provide a long lasting solution to the mud/flooding issue. Dave R notified Gabe of vandalism on the Kiosk at the B/W and Airline Trail junction (red spray paint on the plexiglass). Bob M shared information on removing paint from plastics. We will clean this or replace if necessary. DEEP Police were informed of the vandalism. There are two blowdowns in the preserve which are on the 10K and 30K courses. One will get a simple route around. The other blowdown will be addressed this month. Mowing season starts in the next week or two. Linda, Bruce and Dale will be sent schedules. Glen has volunteered to help with the mowing effort. Our mower will get its annual maintenance.

Other topics: Adam has group hikes scheduled for 5/12 and 5/21. Per DEEP, Adam should have a sweep for every hike. FGF volunteers are encouraged to come along with Adam and can notify either Adam or Gabe if interested.

Chelsey said that ECSU students were in the building without staff present on 4/20. Staff must be present, not maintainers.

Gardens: Lynne W. reported that the gardens were worked on this week and mostly garlic mustard was removed. Grant for the accessible trail probably won't be until fall. Meanwhile, the winter wasn't cold enough to kill the jumping worms so we have last year's adults and a new hatch causing more erosion.

Chelsey said new exhibits have been added, a fish tank now and hissing cockroaches coming soon. She needs a red-eared slider turtle. Lynne would like to know if they eat jumping worms. Chelsey is creating signage. A prepackaged seed swap is an idea. She can't do anything with the canoe equipment due to

liability per the State. The Fairy Cottage program could use the pavilion. Matt will look into repurposing the old showers into a storage area for materials.

Next meeting Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 1 PM at Goodwin.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Wenner.