

Friends of Goodwin Forest

May 13, 2021

Via Zoom

Meeting opened at 1:02pm. The minutes of March 9, 2021 were unanimously accepted.

Treasurer Report: Bill reported that this report is only through March. April figures are not available. Bill noted that he had to make some changes on the budget report. He reported that we actually have \$2558 more which makes the total balance higher about \$40,000. He noted that there isn't a lot of activity as of yet, but as the year moves on will see more.

Membership update: Jim reported he is having second thoughts on purging the list, for a good portion of members do volunteering and a lot of volunteers are not members. At this time purging the list is not a priority. As of this date we have 96 paid up members. Some discussion followed and it was determined to table it for now.

Social media/marketing: Lynn reported that we have a decent following on Facebook. She has been doing an occasional Blog and one that she did on ticks, was picked up by the Putnam paper, The Town Crier. She encouraged us to share the information on groups that would be interested, for this gives us more exposure.

CFPA News and updates: Eric introduced new staff. Jeb Stevens, who is the Trail protection Coordinator and Megan Strange, who is the new Development Assistant. Eric gave an update on the Personal Service Agreement, there isn't one, the last one expired at the end of 2020. He gave an update on legislative happenings with the Passport to Parks. He stated they were trying to pass a bill that would have cut the Passport to Parks program in half and there was also another piece of a bill that was trying to utilize monies from the Passport to Parks program to give free swimming lessons in eight of the state parks. He noted that he has to keep on guard to watch for and prevent these items from happening during the legislative session. Eric reported that he hopes that bonding money will be released for the recreational trails and greenways programs. He has been working with the governor's office to get representation out to trails day, or events leading up to trails day, so that they can see what we do out here. He noted that 3 million dollars has been tied up in this bonding for a long while.

DEEP news & updates: Matt gave a brief update on the house and noted that they are working on getting more funding for the finish work and roof. He reported that he hasn't heard any new news on the dam project. He reported that the tree projects are wrapping up and trails are opening. Bob made a request to have the tractor returned to Goodwin to work on the trails.

Director's report: Beth reported she is anticipating the center opening for Memorial Day and that Goodwin will be offering in person programs again. She noted that she is utilizing volunteers again, and needs more educational volunteers to lead hikes or do a hike and seek program. She gave an update on the PSA- there is none but it is in the final stages. Beth gave a short in-service on the portal and how to record volunteer hours. She shared photos of the bird blind and reported that the scouts would be building a new one. An update was given on things to come: funding has been received for the Windham Partnership, The Airline Summer Camp will have 2 days at Goodwin August 16-17, Master Woodland Management Program begins August, Coverts Weekend is September 9-12, and the Girl Scouts of CT partnership will have a program in the fall.

Education/program report: Meg reported that they had a lot of webinars, but now they are starting to phase them out as they go into in person programs. In person programs will take place on Trails Day, she has a possum program scheduled as well as an edible plant walk, all can be viewed on the CFPA/FGF website. She gave an update to the garden sign project which should be completed by the end of May. Jim read a letter from a participant in one of the educational programs giving accolades to Megan.

Goodwin Center physical plant report: Mike gave a report on what was happening at Goodwin with the siding project, stairs and grounds. He noted most of the shutters have been fixed and replaced.

Trail's report: Bob reported that they have been working on areas with known encroachment by briars and that the new trail map has been installed in all of the kiosk locations by Mike. He noted that the grant by AQHA has been pulled for this year.

Garden report: Warren reported the gardens look beautiful and that he needs a source for composted manure. He also noted he needs more volunteers to assist with all the projects at hand. He is also concerned that there are not many frogs in the pools. He and volunteers have been working on the plant sale coming up on Trails Day weekend.

Status on full time maintainer and other staffing needs: Jim brought up staffing needs at Goodwin and how do they compare with other facilities. Discussion took place. Beth noted from her perspective Goodwin needs more staff support. We need a full-time maintainer, full time director and gardener positions. She noted that Matt does rely heavily on the seasonal people, but a full-time maintainer is necessary. Bill noted that the Friends cannot commit to fund the maintainer position, that we can do for a year. A vote was taken to split the extension of the maintainer (Aug-Dec) for this year and share the expense with the Friends of Mansfield. \$2750 was approved to cover one half of the maintainer position from September 1-December 31. Discussion took place regarding the Goodwin Trust Fund. Who oversees it, how much money is in the trust, how is it managed? Lynn gave a brief history as to why the Friends was developed. There is money in the trust that goes to DEEP to pay for the seasonal maintainer, gardener and naturalist. It was suggested we put some pressure on DEEP to get us information

on the trust. A suggestion was made to ask Lori to the next meeting in July, and she bring us this information and also emphasize the need for a full-time position for Goodwin.

Other: Laura McCabe gave a report on the Airline Trail map. A grant was given and the maps will be available at different locations at no charge. She will get some for the center.

Next meeting July 15, 2021 (Thursday) at 1pm. In person. Meeting adjourned at 2:42.

Respectfully submitted by Emily Logee-Savoie