

Friends of Goodwin Forest

Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2023

Present: Jim Giana, Bruce Spaman, Bill Marshall, Steve Broderick, Stan Crawford, Linda Wenner, Beth Bernard, Dale May, Kate May were present in person. Eric Hammerling, Matt Quinn, Robert Mazzawy, Lynn Kochiss and Lori Brant were present on Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Jim at 1:05 PM. The minutes of November 8, 2022 were accepted unanimously.

Jim mentioned that CFPA office manager Terri Peters is retiring. If individuals would like to contribute to her surprise retirement gift the web address is <https://terri-s-art-travel-and-music-fund.cheddarup.com>. Terri has done a lot to help the FGF. Bill made a motion to give Terri a gift of \$100. The motion was approved unanimously.

Elections: The Slate was presented. President Jim Giana, Vice President Bruce Spaman, Treasurer Bruce Spaman, Recording Secretary Linda Wenner. Motion to elect the slate as presented was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce presented the 2022 year-end report which showed that we did very well, having expenses less than budgeted and income more than budgeted. Actual income was \$30,293 and expenses were \$20,654 leaving a surplus of \$9,639. The draft 2023 Budget was presented. The draft was amended to double the school bus transportation line to \$800 (last year's \$400 was not spent because the school trip was put off until spring). Discussion centered on what DEEP will be funding for the open positions of maintainer and gardener. There will be 2 maintainers hired which will be supervised by Matt Quinn. These positions are not exclusively Goodwin's. There is planning being done to continue the plant sale with the committee of Lynne and Lori to meet with Beth soon. Warren left an extensive list of plants ordered and their sources for us to use. Beth said a Naturalist has just been hired to start on 1/27 – Adam Drouin is a college student at QVCC and Eagle Scout. He indicated that he has no plans to leave the position when he graduates. The Naturalist position is a DEEP seasonal one and FGF sponsors the 90-day break in DEEP funding. Kate said that we need to go back to the educational model for the garden with signs for plants, and also revive master gardeners volunteering to maintain the gardens. Steve made a motion to accept the 2022 report and 2023 draft budget as presented, seconded by Stan, and accepted unanimously.

Membership Report: Jim said we are in "Renewal Season" and 8 renewals have already been received. We have 105 FGF members and 136 dual members with CFPA for a total of 241. The exact count matters when someone signs up for a program that has a discount for members. Jim is working on a new Friends brochure but having trouble in Word. Steve said he designed the original in Publisher and offered to help. Beth suggested a glossy postcard with a QR code such as used for the trail run. Vistaprint is a printing vendor that is very helpful with design. Motion to accept the report by Kate, second by Dale, accepted unanimously.

Social Media: Lynne Warren was ill so there was no report.

Garden: Jim read Warren Hastings' resignation letter. Warren left detailed reports that any future gardener that is hired can use.

CFPA: Due to sketchy Wi-Fi, Eric sent his report to Beth. Eric needs FGF's support for HB 6482 which would add 2 million dollars in additional funding to the trails and greenways funding (RTP) which is going

to the Environment Committee on 1/30 for a public hearing. Eric would like FGF to submit written testimony. Anyone who can attend and speak would be a bonus. Beth will send out the link to the bill and how to submit testimony.

Director's Report: Beth reported that we are now in slow season. Adam starts 1/27 and lives in Eastford. Master Naturalist has combined levels I and II to one year-long course and registration is already up to 20 and starts in April. CFPA changed up our website and the changes are very nice and exciting. It now links directly to the FGF Paypal account for dues. She said she is excited that the Friends are working on a 5 year plan. Beth had many volunteers for invasives management, about 30 people, but when a training was planned only 3 signed up and only 1 actually showed up so it was cancelled. She suggested we should announce we are working on a specific problem area on a specific date and maybe more people would show up for that. The Game of Logging is scheduled for March and Book of Days program is next week. Hikes are scheduled as well. Motion to accept the report by Steve, second by Dale, accepted unanimously.

Trails: Robert sent his report to Beth. Lori is working on printing and laminating the new maps for the kiosks. CFPA has a summer trail crew that could do work at Goodwin so we should come up with some trail projects such as bridges and boardwalks. The trail crew does great work quickly. Glen has been clearing fallen trees and repaired the ramp on the Governors Island viewing platform. RTP funding provided stone and gravel to improve wet trails. Stan donated the proceeds of his kiosk project for Eversource for the trail fund. Gabe Zorabedian will be the new trail chairperson and Robert will be his assistant. Motion to accept the report by Steve, second by Bob and the report was accepted unanimously. Stan noted that Gabe needs to be added to the email list for meeting notices. This led to a discussion of how important it is to expand the email list. Steve said he used to send out notices to about 1500 people. This is a good way to build membership and get volunteers. Anyone who ever gave an email address for any program at Goodwin is our target!

5 Year Plan: goals include full-time Director and Naturalist, strategies for building membership and volunteer numbers, Gift Shop idea, diversity issues, Eric's "83 is not enough" campaign.

Socializing Events: The group desired to have a holiday party such as Feel Good Fridays (= FGF, get it?). A date associated with Arbor Day, April 28th, was suggested. Steve and Kate will work on the specifics. Friends would bring the food and adult beverages would be provided (hospitality budget is \$300/year). We might start with a hike or walk at 3 or 4 PM and then party/socialize at 5 PM. Legislators would be invited. We have two new legislators to invite – Hampton Rep Pat Boyd and Senator Jeff Gordon as well as Chaplin Rep Doug Dubitsky.

DEEP Audit: Jim reviewed the salient points in the auditor's report on DEEP. They were concerned about Friends groups misappropriating funds. Our finances go through CFPA so we have an excellent paper trail of our expenditures for Goodwin. The auditors did have concerns about Friends operating Gift Shops on state property so we will have to have a written agreement with clearly defined boundaries if we decide to do one at Goodwin.

Other Business: Bruce suggested a spring clean-up half day work party since we have not had a maintainer to do it. Linda suggested we do it prior to any social event so things look nice for the party. Family Forestry Day is in planning for the fall. It was suggested that the Boathouse should be included in the 5 Year Plan. Dale said it makes sense now that the dam is completed and the water level will be stable.

Motion to adjourn by Steve, second by Dale and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Next meeting is March 14, 2023, at 6 PM and on Zoom. Note the evening meeting time!

Respectfully submitted by Linda Wenner.