

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT LAND TRUST

Monday 2.27.23 @ 6.30 PM

Bonnet Shores Community Center
130 Bonnet Shores Road
Narragansett, RI 02882

CALL TO ORDER

Land Trust Chair Mary Flynn called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Those in attendance were Mary Flynn- Chair, Terry Beaty, and Art Hardy.

Steve Danuszar from the Council was present and has agreed to be nominated as the Land Trust Liaison.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Approval of Minutes from 1.9.23 meeting. Motion made by Art Hardy; seconded by Terry Beaty.

Beaver removal report

Mark Gillooly, BSFD District Manager, gave a detailed presentation of the steps he took to resolve the beavers that had built dams near the Community Center which led to partial flooding of Bonnet Shores Rd. Mark's complete presentation and supported documents are included as a pdf with this document.

Art is concerned about the impact of the new area of standing water, which will likely kill the trees that are now in water.

Public comment on the beavers:

Neal Colman said he had gone to a workshop at URI on beavers and learned the history of the beaver. He expressed that he would have preferred the beavers were not killed.

Bill DelGizzo disagreed with how the District Manager and the Land Trust Trustees handled the beaver situation. He said that the Trustees should have met and came up with a plan and we should not have deferred to the pertinent local and state agencies.

The Trustees decided that they would plan to develop protocols for the wildlife that may inhabit the fire district using the expertise of the appropriate agencies.

Old Business

Report on Land Acquisitions – Mary is not aware of any recent news.

Wesquage Pond Watershed Sampling Program – Mary contacted URI for information on recruiting a volunteer. Elizabeth Herron said she would try to find someone for us. Mary will send to local high schools the volunteer opportunity. She will also ask for it to be sent as an e-blast to the BSFD community.

Update on FEMA survey – Mary said that there is nothing new since the December report. The next update for March.

Update on Watershed Plan – Mary contacted David Black who said that he is working on it and will let us know when it is done.

Signage for Land Trust properties – Art and Linda Kaufman (who did the artwork for the sign) have been working on the signage and the sign for Wesquage Pond should be ready to be hung this spring.

Tax exempt status- Mary forgot to cover this at the January meeting. She had contacted Laurie McCarthy in December regarding the BSFD tax exemption. and. Mary emailed the RI office of Taxation and was told that the Land Trust never had tax exempt status. Steve Danuszar said that he would investigate the issue and get back to us, at both the state and federal level.

Land Trust Charter - Trustees have been working on edits/ additions since September 2022. We had hoped to be able to vote on the changes by this meeting, but Mary decided we would not decide because of the following: there will be only three trustees present at the February 2023 meeting; David Kaufman, although next highest votes in 2021 election, was appointed in October 2022; and Terry Beaty was appointed February 2023. We will discuss the charter at a future LT meeting and plan to have a meeting specifically to finalize the edits. The LT would plan to then vote after the LT election this year (2023) at a LT meeting where there are at least four Trustees present.

New business

Trustee recruitment and roles for this year – David Kaufman has written a piece that could be used for advertising for new Trustees. This was done presuming we would have a new charter that would include seven Trustees. Mary suggested that we advertise the Trustee position using the FD eblast but that we also ask residents if they would like to be involved as volunteers in various roles of the LT for the coming year. They could then run for a Trustee position at the time of the next election, should they be interested.

BSFD insurance and listing of Land Trust properties. Laurie McCarthy said that she would investigate the wording to make sure the Land Trust properties, including the trail at the Community Center are covered.

Budget for 2024 – A discussion was had regarding what to include and Mary will submit the budget to the Council. Neal Colman said he would like funds for benches for the trail and would give Mary an estimate for the cost of the lumber for the scouts to build them.

Fund raising – Bill DelGizzo texted Mary a resident (Kristen Deberghes) who he said was interested in fundraising for the FD. Mary called on 2.20.23 and left a VM.

RI land trust alliance RFP - It was decided that we would not apply for the funds for legal fees from donated land as we did not think there would be a need in the coming year.

Maintenance of Land Trust properties - RI Land Trust Alliance recommends an annual inventory of LT properties. There was a brief discussion on this, and it was decided we would talk about it again in the coming LT meetings.

Public comment

Comments and concerns are welcomed from BSFD residents. The Chair asks that you state your name and address. Please limit your time to no more than three minutes. Please provide your comments in a tone that is respectful and refrain from language or tone that is rude or antagonistic. For any concerns raised that involve the duties of the Land Trust, please provide constructive solutions. We welcome any volunteer efforts that would help further the work of the Land Trust. Thank you for considering these requests.

Faith Lasalle made some comments on the Charter. Mary said that there would be a meeting in the coming months specifically to address the Land Trust Charter.

Laurie McCarthy brought up the cost for renting the Community Center, which should be increased. Mary said that she would investigate local venues to get a sense of their cost. Mary also said that we should consider replacing the tables and chairs and improving the interior of the CC.

The next LT meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2023, at 6:30 pm.

Art Hardy made a motion to end the meeting at 7:30 pm and Terry Beaty seconded it.