

MEETING MINUTES
BONNET SHORES LAND TRUST

Monday, March 25th, 2024 @6:30 pm
Bonnet Shores Community Center
130 Bonnet Shores Road
Narragansett, RI 02882

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Land Trust Chair Terry Beaty called the meeting to order at 6.31p. Those in attendance were: Mary Flynn, Art Hardy, David Kaufman and Council Liaison Steve Danuszar. Absent: Steve Puerini. Additionally present was Council member Bill DelGizzo.

Approval of Minutes

The Meeting Minutes from the February 20th, 2024 were approved. Mary made the motion to accept, Art seconded that motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The Meeting Minutes from October 2023 [Charter] and November 2023 [By laws] were approved. Dave made the motion to accept, Art seconded the motion. Motion carried: 4-0

Chair Terry Beaty made the announcement that all Public Comment would occur at end of meeting agenda, unless specifically requested.

Active items:

1. 501c3 Reinstatement Project Update – Dave gave a very thorough presentation on his work to date on the 501c3 application. He went through the rationale for the reinstatement, the approval by the BSFD Council to proceed and the comprehensive details required to defend our application to the Federal IRS for reinstatement. Terry stated that he has asked the Council to vote on the by-laws on the meeting tomorrow night.
2. John Chereskin, Tax Collector for BSFD spoke regarding the BSFD properties that have not paid Fire District taxes. Some of these properties are contiguous to properties currently part of the LT and it may make sense for the LT to consider acquiring them.
3. Mary had made a request that we entertain a meeting schedule that would include some morning meetings. It was decided that this would be reconsidered pending verification that we would still be in compliance with OMA.

Ongoing Business

1. Recruitment – Plan on a new membership drive to attract members through t-shirt sales, kids camp parents and volunteer events. Promote projects that could benefit by member recruitment of the residents. Terry suggested we work on recruiting BSFD residents to become more involved with the LT.
2. Wesquage Pond Watershed Sampling Program & 2024 Testing Plan – Art has volunteered to do the water testing for 2024 and will be attending training at URI on March 27th.

New Business

1. Hosting an Earth Day event this year – Earth Day: Monday, April 22nd, 2024 – Art said that in the past, the community had a clean-up day and he would like to have it again this year. The day to do this was discussed as Earth Day is a Monday. Art suggested the Sunday the day before. It was also suggested that it be on the Saturday of that weekend.

2. Create a calendar of LT fund-raising activities such as Earth Day, tee-shirt sale days with our logo and “I support the Bonnet Shores Land Trust”, etc. Terry suggested a calendar is created and all those present agreed that would be useful.
3. Make public the vehicles for donations to the Land Trust. (i.e.: online, PayPal, credit card, check). This item is on the agenda for the March BSFD meeting, which is scheduled for 3.26.24.
4. Send a mailing to taxpayers about LT efforts in the community; ways to donate. John Chereskin suggested this be included with the tax bill. There was a comment that there will be other things in that mailing so we might consider another way to get the word out. Steve D was asked the number of emails on the eblast and he was not sure but would look into it.
5. Include our mission statement or supporting message on all materials. All agreed this would be useful.
6. Schedule a Goal Setting exercise for 2024-2025, review at next meeting. All agreed this would be useful. Terry also suggested the LT solicits suggestions from the community.

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.

Nancy Cordy expressed gratitude to Dave for his extensive work on the tax-exempt paperwork and the by-laws, mentioning all the components he has accomplished. She expressed concern with the grant that was submitted by the BSFD council in February 2024. She said she had a number of concerns with what was provided for information, citing specifically that the BSFD does not have 501c3 status and the Audubon donated Wesquage Pond to the LT. She was also concerned with the process. Terry noted that the LT tries to be as transparent with anything that is done, including as many people as possible on the emails. Nancy also asked if the t-shirts could be made in a female style.

Lloyd Albert also applauded the work of Dave on all his valuable work. He questioned Dave re: the liability of the BSFD for the tax on the land of the LT if there is not tax-exempt status. Dave is not sure if the cost would be retroactive to when the LT lost its 501(c)(3) status.

Faith LaSalle was on the Zoom call. She suggested that the LT establish a “Friends of the LT”. She also questioned how other Fire Districts handle their land. She mentioned East Greenwich have rules and regulations and not by-laws.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 18th, 6:30pm

Adjournment at 7.30p. Motion made by Mary, seconded by Dave.