

## **FWT Board Meeting Minutes January 11, 2021**

**Attending:** John Boettcher, Bud Gearhart, Ronald Happ, Hal Harris, Ken Merkey, Norma Platt, Bill Polito, Steve Snyder, Anna Taylor, Eric Turberg

### **A. Administrative Tasks**

1. Approve/Change Agenda - [Approved](#)
2. Approve Minutes from November Meeting - [Approved](#)
3. Membership Status: Denise Billsback – [Detailed report distributed via email to Board.](#)
  - [Total membership: 226](#)
  - [Volunteer hours worked: 0 \(COVID-19, was 565 in 2019\)](#)
4. Review of Treasurer Report: Bill Polito – [Detailed report distributed via email to Board.](#)
  - [Donations/memberships are up 21 percent, but YOY comparison hard to do](#)
  - [Some long-time contributors missing from 2020.](#)
  - [Michael Johnson donations to be kept separate, with plans to update the family with plans as they evolve.](#)
  - [Tax return to be filed in the next few days.](#)
5. Social Media: Ken Merkey
  - [Enthusiastic trail usage documented on social media, especially on weekends.](#)
  - [Engagement up YOY: FB 774 followers \(from 751 in November\); Instagram 209 \(from 191\).](#)
6. Website Inquiry Summary: Norma Platt - [Detailed report distributed via email to Board.](#)
  - [Report of tree down in Webster Park \(11/23\)](#)
  - [Accessibility of trails at Finn Park \(11/27\)](#)
  - [Where leashed dogs are permitted \(12/1\)](#)
  - [Donation question \(12/1\)](#)
  - [How to give membership as Christmas gift \(12/7\)](#)
  - [Report of vandalism at Four Mile Creek \(12/14\)](#)
  - [Report of gunshots at WRNP \(12/27\)](#)
7. Communications Update: John Boettcher – [nothing to report](#)
8. Habitat Committee Update: Norma Platt
  - [Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Coordinating with town on staffing/funding to implement treatment of trees, but Covid-19 delays.](#)
  - [Mowing of fields. Gosnell big field and small meadow, Whiting Road fields. Mowing was not completed by town because of equipment breakdown and hunting season. Ron Happ to work with Glenn Morrell from town to ensure it is done correctly in the spring. \*\*ACTION ITEM:\*\* Updated mowing process documented and to be posted on Website.](#)
  - [Habitat committee couldn't do invasive species work because of Covid-19.](#)
  - [Trimming of Gosnell fence line. John Boettcher repaired blade trimmer and cleared Baker Road fence line.](#)
  - [Owl and Wood Duck Nesting box. Egg fragments and feathers showed evidence of use.](#)

- Lake Road Project. County project to widen Lake Road with shoulders, straighten it, and improve drainage from Pellet to Bay Road. The railroad bridge for the Hojack trail will be removed. County working on eminent domain to gain easement at the embankment just west of Pellet Road. Utility work has begun to move poles back.

9. Website Updates: Steve Snyder:

- Website refresh committee: Steve Snyder, Denise Bilsback, John Boettcher, Hal Harris, Norma Platt, Don Schaefer, Andrew Welch.
- First step: Zoom meeting to understand Andrew Welch's design and hosting proposal.

## B. Main Topics

1. Waivers (Parks & Rec) and Conflict of Interest: to be signed

- Volunteer waiver needs to be signed by stewards and board members for "Continuing Work."  
**ACTION ITEM:** Upon notification that the documents are finalized, all must sign a copy, likely at the Parks and Rec office.
- Group events need separate waivers, for events such as work parties. Even organizer is in charge of getting that waiver.

2. Planning:

- Buckner Property. (See also map distributed via email to Board by Hal.) Much of the property is less desirable for trails, with 39 acres flat field, and wooded area to the east bordering cul de sac on Salt Road. Property to the north includes part of Salt Creek that connects to Treatment Plant property, so could link up to FMCP with an easement.
- State Rd Property. Drainage work done to build up the spillway and reducing the amount of erosion. Parking lot still to be installed by town, but no ETA.
- New Trails. Approached by a family with possibility of donating property as open space to enhance WRNP. Ron, Craig, Bill, Hal and Anna to investigate and brainstorm. Report coming to the board. Ideas to come first, then propose offer to town.

3. Maintain:

- Projects remaining from 2020: Repair Hickory Bark tree blow down.  
**ACTION ITEM:** Eric to prepare estimate. Anna to discuss financing with Library.
- Brainstorm 2021 Projects
  - Continuing work: Bank trail into Big Woods from Pellet Road
  - WRNP White trail at far west. Steep embankment with limited space to reroute has herd paths causing erosion (see email from Norma). Need a permanent solution, possibly handrails and or signage. Effort needs a subcommittee.
  - Hojack Trail. Despite the trenching from Drumm to Van Alstyne, still quite wet. Can we raise the level with gravel like that used on Bird Sanctuary trail? Maybe need to reroute drainage pipe?
  - Tree planting project. To fight pests killing hemlock, beech, ash, and oak trees and effects of climate change, consider an annual maintenance project with a strategy to plant trees. Genesee Land Trust could be a resource with expense figures from their projects. DEC does have some trees, but they are tiny and may not be appropriate.

**ACTION ITEM:** Norma to contact the Genesee Land Trust for someone to speak to Board. Hal to look at other options.

- State Road.
  - Bridge project over Four Mile Creek already signed up to be done by a scout.
  - Small bridge to be built by Board.
  - Kiosk at parking lot once town builds it. **ACTION ITEM:** Hal to follow up with town to ensure it is completed.
- Brochure boxes on trails. Membership boxes needed at Vosburg kiosk, Gosnell, middle of Hojack, and State Road. Boxes were built by Larry and Rich in the past. If someone will build boxes, Bud will install.
- Friends table? Set up at the WRNP or other locations to evangelize about FWT to trail users. Hal and Ken willing to staff. **ACTION ITEM:** Ken to put together a tentative plan with dates. Board members can staff it on a repeating volunteer basis.
- Movement on 19 acres contiguous to 4 Mile Creek on NE side that could increase trails by ½ mile. Once sale concludes, could route trail with culvert or a bridge.

All projects to be reviewed for next Board meeting in February.

4. Mapping – Anna had contact from someone who is also a project manager and does mapping work with GIS. Norma expressed concern that whatever process is done must be transferrable with multiple people trained in how to do it. Bud, Craig, Norma all interested in mapping. **ACTION ITEM:** Anna set up a Zoom call for Friday Jan. 15.

#### C. Promote:

- Wegmans Passport 2021 kick off. Friends Table, collect passport, guided hike. Timing: Spring or Winter to avoid muddy trails. Combine with Scavenger Hunt? Would we have the passports? **ACTION ITEM:** Anna to check with Wegmans contact on availability of passports.
- Scavenger Hunt winter event. Set up by Emily who did the last one. Scheduled for Jan 23 from 9 to 11 at Rec Center. All proceeds to benefit FWT. **ACTION ITEM:** Bud and Anna to work on a Friends Table.
- Review any additional events for 2021. Monthly work days as safety allows. Passport kickoff. Possible revival of “Hidden Gems” event. Want something that’s not a burden for the Board. Could be a partnership with the Library. **ACTION ITEM:** All to bring ideas to February meeting.
- *Idea:* Music in the Park partnership with schools. Hal to contact Carmen Gumina about it.

7. Open Board Position - Sarah McNeary White is new Board Secretary

8. Open Discussion - none

**Adjourn!**