

West Pikeland Land Trust

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MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 23, 2008

Attendance: Jim Rowan Ann Orth Sean O'Neill Teresa Wood
Suzanne Kaplan Tom Williams Curt Grogan
Melinda Mercurio Bill Cracas Mike Groman

Lisa Lacroix (visitor)

1. Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of previous Board of Directors Meeting May 27, 2008 were reviewed and unanimously approved, except Teresa Wood who was absent for the meeting.

2. Financial Report/ Membership Drive

Teresa distributed and briefly reviewed monthly financials. She indicated that the \$5,000 check was received from DCNR and was include in a separate account to track income and expenses against this grant.

3. Committee Reports

Open Space: Curt advised that the OS Committee had a successful meeting with BOS to review assessment documents and discuss funding required both at the end of the year and short term for incidentals such as appraisals. Curt advised that the approved documents had been submitted to the Planning Commission and adjoining municipalities as part of the 45 day review process, but the BOS had not scheduled a hearing. Bill Cracas suggested this would probably be on the August agenda. Bill advised that the top priority was for the BOS to receive the priority list of target properties and potential values to submit to underwriter. This list was part of the deliverables due from NLT and was needed ASAP. Curt indicated that the Conservation Priority Mapping employed by NLT, using SmartConservation software process was also reviewed. Ann Orth questioned some of the methodology employed, which seemed to overlook some conservation resources (e.g. Agriculture) and suggested that a separate criteria be established to give more consideration to Agricultural properties, which may qualify for county or state grants. It was discussed and felt that there were ample opportunities on the approved criteria and comment section to single out potential Agricultural conservation opportunities and any major revision to the approved criteria might delay approval. Sean suggested the final draft of this submission should contain an executive summary with a narrative of what this tool is and how it will be used by the committee in the procurement of easements.

Jim Rowan indicated that he has had preliminary meetings with French & Pickering Trust and NALT concerning partnership opportunities and will attempt to schedule future meetings with these and similar conservation organizations with the OS Committee and/or WPLT Board.

Trails: Lisa Lacroix reviewed the June Trail Subcommittee Report, including a summary of the Pickering Creek Bridge Project for which grant money was received. She advised F&P Trust had approved the project and was working with Jeri and Township Engineer to approve DEP permit. Lisa also reported that her committee had received a map of Pine Creek Park and would begin mapping trails next month. She indicated that the vision of her committee was to develop kiosks to contain tri-fold maps of the Pine creek Park Trails to be located on at least two trail heads. Ann Orth suggested that there may be a possibility of getting a \$2,500 grant from the Miller Fund to help fund this effort. Lisa requested that any projects that are being reviewed by the OS Committee that have potential trail opportunities should be referred to her committee. Even better, it would be good to have a member of the Trials Committee on OS and visa versa.

Communication: Melinda reviewed a copy of Communications Committee mid-year report card dated June 23, 2008 indicating completed items this past year and those that will be deferred until next year. She advised that the transfer of the WPLT domain name was now complete and encouraged everyone to visit the WPLT website. Although still under construction, Melinda indicated that the completion of the website was her top priority and she distributed a revised copy of the site development plan with content assignments from various other committees. Melinda suggested that her goal was to complete the website in the 4th quarter and coordinate this announcement with the annual report and membership campaign later this year.

Monitoring and Stewardship: Tom Williams reported that there were no monitoring activities this past month. Tom had not followed up again with Jeri to get a complete inventory of township owned property and copies of any conservation easements on Township owned property. He was unsure if the newly formed EAC or WPLT should monitor these properties.

Finance, Development & Grants: Ann Orth advised that the \$4,000 LTA/PALTA grant to complete the compliance audit for accreditation was no longer available. She indicated that she was working on the Miller grant for \$2,500 and was thinking about a membership event, possibly a potluck dinner at a conserved property, this fall. She was unsure what the expectations were for the finance component of her committee. Jim Rowan suggested that her responsibility for financial reporting would be limited to the expected revenue from potential grants.

Education: Mike Groman indicated that he was also thinking about a fall event with a guest speaker that would work well as an educational event and a membership/development event contemplated by Ann. He would discuss with Ann and provide some more details at the July meeting. Suzanne suggested the Creamery at Milky Way Farm as a possible venue for a seasonal event. This is a conserved property with a capacity for about 50 people. Teresa advised that the plant sale on May 10, in cooperation with the NLT event at Binky Lee, had yielded approximately \$250 net proceeds to WPLT. Bill Cracas made a motion that WPLT donate \$50 to NLT to benefit Binky Lee, for their cooperation in this event. Her motion was approved unanimously.

Strategic Planning: Suzanne indicated the highest priority this year was the recruitment of additional Board members (see below). She requested that any nominations for Board memberships be forwarded to her. Suzanne also indicated that she will begin preparing quarterly report from WPLT to the BOS next month and requested that all committee members forward quarterly reports of their committee activities no later than July 9.

Governance and Compliance: Sean reviewed a draft of the proposed revisions to the existing Operating agreement between WPLT and the Township. Fundamental to this discussion would be the role of WPLT under the new ordinance and whether or not they would hold easements. Tom Williams felt strongly that the revised Agreement should not preclude WPLT from being the grantee as contemplated in the original Agreement. He felt that WPLT would be better suited to holding easements and would be better received in the community than WPT for this purpose. This would give landowners another option among the other conservation organizations to hold easements. Bill Cracas made a motion that WPLT should be included an option to hold easements. All voted in favor except Ann Orth who felt WPLT should be the preferred easement holder for easements purchased with OS funds and that other organizations should be considered only under special circumstances. Sean agreed to review the Ordinance for any gaps in indemnification language that should be tightened up with the new WPLT role.

General & Administrative: No Report.

4. WPLT Board Member Terms and Service.

Suzanne Kaplan indicated that there were currently 10 Board Members and the By-laws provided for 9-11. The following informal poll was conducted to determine requirements to nominate additional Board members for next year:

Tom Williams - will remain, but unable to fulfill Officer or Committee Chair role
Jim Rowan - will remain, but step down as President & Chairman 1/09
Teresa Wood- will remain and continue as Treasurer
Curt Grogan - will remain and continue as Chair of OS Committee
Bill Cracas - will remain as BOS representative
Melinda Murcurio - will remain and Chair Communications for 2009
Sean O'Neill - will remain on Board
Mike Groman - will remain on Board and Chair Education
Ann Orth - will remain on Board and Chair Development
Suzanne Kaplan - will resign at end of term 12/08

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Monday, July 28, 2008 at 7:00 pm at the Township Building.

Respectfully Submitted,
Thomas L. Williams
July 2, 2008 (Revised July 29, 2008)