

WILLOWSFORD CONSERVANCY
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
November 16, 2017

Minutes

Attending: Rick DiBella, Mark Trostle, Stacey Kessinger – Trustees; Iris Gestram – Executive Director

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:52 pm.

Approval of Agenda: Mark moved to approve the agenda. Rick seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Minutes: Mark moved to approve the minutes from September 21, 2017. Rick seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Executive Session:

- The Board discussed 2018 employee salaries and benefits.

New Business:

- 2018 Budget

Iris reviewed the proposed 2018 Conservancy non-farm portion of the budget for both operations and capital expenses. The farm portion of the budget will be reviewed in December. The board reviewed the proposed budget by category to include an annual assessment increase to the residents. The resolution to accept the budget with a developer contribution of \$150,000 and an increase in annual resident Conservancy fees to \$240 per household, billed quarterly, was passed 3-0. The resolution will be forwarded to the HOA, and a Conservancy letter to the residents will accompany the HOA announcement of 2018 assessments.

- Board of Trustees

The board approved the process to appoint a resident trustee to the Conservancy Board. Motion passed 3-0.

- 2016 Form 990

The 2016 Form 990 was reviewed by the Board and submitted to the IRS on November 15.

Old Business:

- Lease Agreements for employee Tenant Housing.

The motion to approve passed 3-0 after Mark suggested a change in language regarding utilities for group housing, to clearly include utilities in the monthly rent. Documents have been approved, discussion will continue about how the leases become implemented.

- Farm market study has been received by the Board for review and future discussion.

Executive Director Report:

- Website: Staff are working with Sparkfire to complete final edits and programming for the planned launch.
- Cedar Pond Pavilion: County permits were received, and site work and dam repairs are underway. Construction is anticipated to begin in December; the target date for project completion is the end of April 2018.
- Hidden Meadow Event Field: Site planning has been completed and construction is scheduled to begin this fall for a projected completion and site opening in summer 2018. The event field will accommodate Conservancy events and group camping, and will be available for residents to rent for events and group camping.
- Fleetwood Maintenance Facility: The maintenance facility and adjacent fuel station were completed in October and are fully operational.
- Deer Management Program: Twenty hunters qualified for this year's season (including 17 residents and 3 volunteers), to hunt in The Greens and Grant. Communication to residents continue through Conservancy e-newsletters and Willowsford Weekly, free-standing e-mails, and trail signage. Notifications were sent at the start of the hunting season and continue before and during each firearms hunt period. Greens trails are posted as "CLOSED" during firearms hunts. Program information, including safety information, hunting guidelines, schedules and maps, are posted in the Conservancy Programs section of the WillowsfordLife.com website.
To date, 16 deer have been harvested.
The 2017 Deer Impact Study, conducted by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI), has been completed, including deer browse studies, wildlife camera surveys, and a spotlighting survey in the four villages. Results will be available in 2018.
- Land Steward Hiring: Applications are being reviewed for this position.
- Recent & Upcoming Events
 - The popular annual **Community Bonfire & Camp-over** sold out with 200 residents attending on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 30-October 1, in The Greens.
 - The **Rev3 Trail Mix** took place on Saturday, Oct. 7, including 5K, 10K and Half-Marathon races, followed by the Rev3 Tenderfoot Adventure Race on Sunday, Oct. 8, in The Greens.
 - The Conservancy received much positive feedback on participating in **Autumn Fest** on Saturday, Oct. 14 with wildlife ambassadors from The Blue Ridge Wildlife Center and hands-on family activities, in The Greens.
 - The annual **Rev3 Ghoul Run** (Glow Run) was held on Halloween weekend, Saturday, Oct. 28, at The Greens, co-promoting Trick-or-Treating at the Greens model homes. Despite extensive marketing by Willowsford and good weather, attendance was very low with about 120 attendees. Steady decline in Glow Run attendance is attributed to lack of Rev3 marketing, issues with event

implementation, and competition from two other Rev3 Glow Runs in nearby communities. With the event not making use of Conservancy trails, low attendance and lack of revenue opportunities, no additional Glow Runs will be held by the Conservancy.

- **Nature programs with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy** were well attended, and nearly all sold out. These included a Pollinator Walk on Aug. 8 and Bird Walk on Sept. 17 – both in The Greens; a Fall Colors Walk on Nov. 5 in The Grant; and a *Gardening with Natives* class on Nov. 8, in The Grange. Additional programs will be scheduled for 2018.
- **2018 programming** will kick off with the *Landscape for Life* class series, February 13-April 7, at The Grange. Instructors include professionals from the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, Piedmont Environmental Council, and Virginia native plant nursery and design businesses. Nature and wildlife programs are scheduled for March and April lead by VDGIF biologist Kevin Rose, and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy volunteers.
- **Farm Business Planning:** The Conservancy has contracted with an experienced farm business consultant to evaluate Willowsford Farm operations in the context of sustainable “agrihood” farm models, and to provide assistance with business planning. Phase 1 is scheduled to be completed by December 12.
- **Farm Tenant House:** County zoning permitting is expected to be completed in early December, to begin construction of the farm manager residence near the Grant farm operation. Mark Trostle mentioned that he has requested a meeting to review the permit application with the County. Site work has started and completion is expected to be spring 2018.

Next Meeting Date: January 18, 2018

Meeting adjourned at 1:57 pm.