

WILLOWSFORD CONSERVANCY  
Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
July 20, 2017

Minutes

Attending: Rick DiBella, Stan Settle, Mark Trostle – Trustees; Iris Gestram – Executive Director; Mike Snow – Director of Farm Operations

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm.

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

Minutes: Mark moved to approve the minutes from May 18, 2018. Stan seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Fleetwood Fuel Station: Mark moved the motion to approve construction of a fuel station at the Fleetwood Road maintenance facility, and for Iris to enter into contract in the amount of up to \$24,315. Rick seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Staffing and Budget: The board reviewed information on future Conservancy staffing and funding. Iris will present a 3-year budget proposal at the September board meeting,

Reports:

- Fleetwood Maintenance Facility: Construction is nearly completed. Remaining items include installation of the fence and gates; installation of the septic system and remaining plumbing; and sitework to accommodate storage and the fuel station.
- Cedar Pond Pavilion: The Conservancy has entered into an agreement with Homestead Timber Frames, Inc. in Tennessee, to craft and raise the Pavilion structure. Once construction drawings are in hand, the Conservancy will contract a GC for the Cedar Pond Pavilion project in The Greens. The three-season facility will support education programs and small events. Construction is anticipated to begin this fall.
- Deer Management Program: Following the posting of the 2017 Deer Management Program information in the June Conservancy e-newsletter and on the HOA website, 23 residents registered to participate this season. Hunters are supporting the Conservancy's land management through volunteer work. To date, hunters have cleared debris from a section of Grant woodland, removed old tree stands, fence and barbed wire, and assisted with trail maintenance throughout the four villages. Another hunter volunteer day is scheduled for July 29, to assist with maintenance of the Riparian Buffer in The Grove.
- Grange Wet Meadow Upgrades: Installation was completed in June, including planting of native wildflowers, grasses and shrubs, and installation of stepping stones, seating boulders, a seating wall and traffic barrier. A \$3,500 grant from the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District supported a portion of the project. Countless tadpoles were

observed in the vernal pools this spring along with a variety of frogs during the April amphibian walk led by a VDGIF biologist. Insects, birds and mammal tracks have been observed throughout the spring and summer, and many of the native plants are well-established. Ongoing maintenance includes control of weeds, invasive plants and deer. Interpretive signs will be installed in mid-August, and a meadow guided walk and opening event is scheduled for August 26.

- The Riparian Buffer in The Grove was completed. It was inspected by LSWCD for approval of an \$8,000 grant toward the cost of installation.
- Deer Impact Study: The Conservancy has entered into a 3-year agreement with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI) to continue work begun in 2016 to study the effect of white-tailed deer on the Conservancy's natural resources; specifically, on forest vegetation. The Smithsonian's fieldwork at Willowsford will include surveys of deer density, of woody plant abundance, and of deer browsing. The board approved a \$57,750 grant paid to the Smithsonian over 3 years to cover the cost of the study. The Conservancy continues its work with the SCBI's "Virginia Working Landscapes" program, conducting surveys of grassland birds, pollinators, mammals and invasive plants on Conservancy open space. Assisted by SCBI scientists, the surveys provide data for evaluating wildlife populations and habitat health.
- Website: Design of the new Conservancy website has been completed. Staff are working with SparkFire Branding on programming the site, for expected launch in late summer.
- Grant Farmhouse: Cost estimates are being reviewed for the construction of the Farm residence near the Everfield Drive farm operation in the southern portion of The Grant.
- Farm Market Study: A draft is being reviewed. The study will help guide the design of the year-round Farm Market planned on Everfield Drive near Rt. 50.

Next Meeting Date: September 21, 2017, 1:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.