



## Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, July 14, 2020  
6:00 p.m.  
Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, Secretary; Doug Chickering, Vice President; Ron DiCola; Weston Forsblad; Bill Gette, President; MaryMargaret Halsey; Kaytee Hojnacki; Lynette Leka, Treasurer; Dave Williams; Jean Adams, Recreational Planner; Matthew Hillman, Refuge Manager; Sharon Ware, Acting Refuge Manager

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 by President Bill Gette.

### 2. Secretary's Reports

The minutes of the March 10, 2020 were approved as presented.

The April "Report in Lieu of Board Meeting" was approved as presented.

The May "Report in Lieu of Board Meeting" was approved as presented.

### 3. Staff Update

Welcome: Refuge Manager, Matt Hillman thanked the Board for inviting him to the meeting. He expressed his pleasure at working with the Friends group at his prior post, the Monomoy refuge, and added that he looks forward to working with our Friends group. Board members introduced themselves and explained their roles.

Volunteer Activities: Acting Manager, Sharon Ware reported that the Visitor Center won't open yet but work on the back deck, pollinator garden and trail maintenance can resume. Bill Gette stated that he plans to start on the deck on the first Wed. in August. Lynette spoke about the garden. Her goal is weeding. She has a small group that is interested in working in the garden and will let the Board know of her needs. She added that the Pines Trail needs work.

#### 4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer. Lynette Leka is catching up on membership and finances and will have a report at the next meeting. In response to a question she explained that the Internship Program stipend has been paid for this year and that we are committed to \$6,000 for the program in 2021. She will send Ron DiCola a copy of the W-9 form.

B. President. Bill Gette reported on the following.

Zoom membership: Bill is currently using his paid membership for Friends Meetings and plans to also use it for programs as well.

Tour with Director Aurelia Skipworth: Bill joined Refuge staff members to host a visit by U.S.F. & W.S. Director Aurelia Skipworth for her June 18 visit. Representatives from MA D.C.R., city government (Mayor Holaday), and MA Wildlife also attended. Highlights of the visit were the new Hellcat boardwalk, and the rabbit breeding pens at Great Bay. Gareth Williams, Wildlife Officer at Parker River was recognized for saving a man's life in Dec. 2019.

Education Programs: Bill suggested using Zoom to offer education programs and offered to do his Shorebird Workshop in August. The Board agreed to offer programs virtually and to an August workshop. The workshop will be offered to members first and to the public if there is space after member registration. Bill will set a date and work with Lynette on publicity. Kaytee will make a flyer and work with Weston on the registration process. The program will begin at 7:00 and last about an hour with time for questions. A co-host will be needed. Sharon mentioned that she will be attending the rescheduled Peer-to-Peer Workshop virtually in September and may learn how other groups are handling programs. She also mentioned that programs can be publicized in the Refuge newsletter.

Brochure Update: MaryMargaret Halsey and Dave Williams will update the brochure's content. The design will stay the same. Bill will send them a copy of the current brochure.

C. Memorial Committee. Bill Gette reported that as of July 11, 2020 a total of \$4,777.06 in gifts has been received. The breakdown is as follows: Unrestricted Donations - \$2,099.06; Intern Program - \$643.00; Premium Memberships - \$1,750.00; Memorial Gifts - \$285.00. MaryMargaret Halsey brought up the idea of a mini-campaign to raise funds for the Intern Program. She will write up a proposal for the next meeting and work with Jim Major.

D. Technology. Weston Forsblad reported that after much work with Network Solutions which handles our webmail, and GoDaddy, our internet host, our website

is now more secure. Although Kaytee has mentioned an alternative host, she had nothing to report at this time.

#### 5. Purple Martin Proposal

Doug Chickering suggested creating and maintaining more housing for the Purple Martins as a Friends project. He explained that presently there are sites at Parking Lot 1 and at the North End at the old Refuge headquarters. He proposes strengthening these colonies and adding a colony at another location. He has talked with Sue McGrath who suggested Refuge headquarters or Joppa Flats but the site he prefers is at Parking Lot 3, a former site where competition from House Sparrows would be less. He agreed that the other sites might be good later on. The biggest cost for the project would be the purchase of the houses. Jean Adams recommended purchasing all new equipment for the colony rather than trying to recycle the old poles and estimated the cost at about \$1,000. For the next meeting, Doug will bring in a detailed plan with a cost estimate.

6. Coast Sweep. This event is now scheduled for Sept. 19, 2020. Bill will contact Ted Olson and Kate Murray regarding their participation.

#### 8. Other Business.

Hellcat Boardwalk. Dave Williams asked about progress on the boardwalk. Sharon explained that pilings for all phases are complete and work on decking and handrails is progressing. The construction contract runs until December but the work may be completed this fall. Sharon offered to give the Board a “behind the scenes” tour within the next two weeks and will be in touch regarding a date.

Water Levels & Mowing. Dave also inquired as to these activities. Jean stated that she has lowered the levels. Mowing may be delayed.

#### 9. Next Meetings.

Tuesday, Aug. 11 @ 6:00

Tuesday, Sept. 15 @ 6:00

10. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.