



## Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

### Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020 6:00 p.m. Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, Secretary; Doug Chickering, Vice President; Ron DiCola; Weston Forsblad; Bill Gette, President; Kaytee Hojnacki; Lynette Leka, Treasurer; Dave Williams; Sharon Ware, Acting Refuge Manager; Peter Hickey, member guest

Absent: MaryMargaret Halsey; Jean Adams, Recreational Planner; Matthew Hillman, Refuge Manager

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by President Bill Gette.
2. Secretary's Report

The minutes of the July 14 meeting were accepted as submitted.

Bill Gette reported on the following action items from the July 14 meeting.

- \*The Refuge has supplied mulch for the garden, a need Lynette Leka identified
- \*Lynette Leka has sent Ron DiCola a copy of the W-9 and he has received it.
- \*The Shorebird Workshop is all set.
- \*Work on the brochure is progressing. Dave Williams requested photos of the new boardwalk. Sharon will send some of hers.

### 3. Refuge Staff Update

Sharon Ware reported on the following.

- \*There is a tentative Sept. completion date for the Hellcat boardwalk and for a ribbon cutting event during National Wildlife Refuge week which is the second week in October. There will be new signage created for the trail with new maps. Finding signs will go up first followed by interpretive signs.
- \*Lots 6 and 7 have opened and 1 & 2 will open this weekend.
- \*Matt Poole has been awarded a grant for engaging youth on the Refuge.
- \*River Valley Charter School has asked for an outdoor classroom for the fall.
- \*The Peer-to-Peer Workshop will take place virtually on Sept. 26. Sharon Ware and MaryMargaret Halsey will attend.

\*Covid Update - As cases increase in MA, the governor has paused the Phase 3 reopening, so the Visitor Center will remain closed.

In response to a question on mowing on the Refuge, Sharon explained that a new mower is coming to replace the one lost by fire so mowing has been delayed. Weston will put a notice on the website explaining the delay.

#### 4. - A. Treasurer

Current Financial Position: Lynette Leka presented the finance report and pointed out that the real financial need is for funding the Internship Program.

Membership: Lynette reported that there are 221 members. Many renew at a higher amount than \$15.00, i.e. make a donation.

Zoom Fee: After a short discussion, Bill made clear his wish to cover the cost of Zoom himself as he uses it for personal projects as well as for the Friends.

Shorebird Workshop: 32 have registered thus far. Lynette sent notices to MassBird and other organizations once our members had responded. There was a request that the program be taped. Weston will look into how that works on Zoom. He will co-host with Bill. They will meet a half hour ahead of the program to finalize plans.

#### 4. - B. President

Coast Sweep: Bill Gette has contacted Governor's Academy and they are interested in helping. He plans to contact CZM about our plans. Doug Chickering will help and Bill will also contact Kate Murray about helping.

Wed. Work Group: Reconstruction of the HQ classroom deck has begun. Through August 11, Wednesday volunteers have contributed 29 hours to this project. Year-to-date, the Wednesday group has contributed a total of 126 hours to maintenance efforts.

Other Volunteer Work: Lynette and her team have done 72 hour in the garden and Nancy Purcell has worked many hours on the Pines Trail.

Newburyport High School Internship Program: The high school would like the Friends to take on a student for an environmentally based project. Discussion revealed support for the idea in principal but also some practical concerns, i.e., the time of year, supervision, the pandemic and its ever-changing nature, the difficulty of finding a meaningful project. It was decided that Bill will contact John Halloran and tell him the Friends group is interested but needs help in finding the right project for a mutually satisfying experience. He will report back on that conversation.

#### 4. - C. Memorial Committee

Bill Gette asked for the Board's thoughts on raising the basic membership cost of \$15.00. The Board felt it should not be raised as many renew but also add a contribution.

#### 4. - D. Technology.

Weston Forsblad reported that he has posted the Shorebirds Workshop, a video from the plover intern and photos of work on the deck project to the Friends website. Sharon offered to send photos of the Hellcat Boardwalk tours that she has given the Board. Weston plans to post minutes of meetings from March to the present.

#### 5. Purple Martin Project

Doug Chickering reported that he is considering an “adopt a gourd” program as a fund raising device for this project. He would reach members and others with a flyer and recruit a team from donors who wish to be involved in the field and other interested people. A site for the project has yet to be finalized. Doug will talk to Nancy Pau about possible sites. For the next meeting Doug will bring a draft of the flyer.

#### 6. Program Calendar

Zoom Ducks Workshop: Bill reported that he would like to schedule regular programming and for November is happy to do his Ducks Workshop. The Board supported this idea so Bill will set a date for the program. Other program ideas include winter raptors (Bill) and from the Board natural history topics (Lynette) and tree swallows (Doug).

Refuge Birding Contest: Bill brought up the idea of holding a week-long birding contest in Jan. or Feb. For a nominal entry fee, individuals or teams of no more than four people would receive a checklist and have a week to see how many species they could see on a day in the area east of the Wilkinson Bridge. Lynette Leka and Ellie Bailey offered to help with this event. Sharon Ware will check with Matt Poole and Matt Hillman on procedures.

#### 7. Fundraising Discussion - postponed

#### 8. Other New Business

Annual Meeting Plan: Lynette Leka and Dave Williams volunteered to plan this event as it will be virtual and both are involved with other groups having virtual meetings before ours takes place. Sharon Ware suggested that at the Peer-to-Peer, other groups may share how they are handling their annual meetings.

Recruiting new Board Members and Associate Board Members: Bill reminded the Board to invite prospective members or volunteers with high interest to a Board meeting as a way of recruiting.

Africa Program: Kaytee Hojnacki reported that Lauren, the presenter for this cancelled program, is willing to give it on Zoom and is now working out the details. Kaydee expects to hear from her in a month.

#### 9. Future Meetings (all virtual and all held at 6:00)

Sept. 15

Oct. 6

Nov. 17

#### 10. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eleanor Bailey, Secretary