



## Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

### Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021 6:30 p.m. Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, secretary; Bill Gette, president; Doug Chickering, vice president; Ted Olsson, vice president; Weston Forsblad; MaryMargaret Halsey; Matt Hillman, refuge manager; Lynette Leka, treasurer; Matt Poole, visitor services; Dave Williams; associate members, Peg Gould and Cheryl Smith.

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Bill Gette.
2. Secretary's Report: The minutes of the Aug. 18 Board meeting were accepted. Ellie Bailey reported that action items from the Aug. 18 meeting were either completed or on the agenda and that she is reviewing art gallery materials.
3. Refuge Staff Update: Matt Poole reported as follows.

\*A very successful Story Hour was held on Sept. 15 recently in the pollinator garden in partnership with the Newburyport Public Library. Matt thanked all who worked on restoring the garden. The next Story Hour is Sept. 29.

\*National Wildlife Refuge Week is Oct. 10 - 16. As usual the North Pool dike will be open. Bill Gette suggested a "Meet the Birders" program for that week and Dave, Doug and MaryMargaret agreed to do it. They will schedule times and let Matt Poole know.

\*Board members should let Matt know of upcoming programs by Sept. 17 so that he can promote them.

\*Hunting season is underway with an archery hunt at Great Bay.

\*Work on marsh restoration in the area just north of the sub headquarters building has begun. Matt will post an information sign near the project explaining its purpose.

\*Nancy Pau will do a program on salt marsh restoration in Nov.

\*There will be a Meet the Artist event in Oct. for those who designed the salt marsh interpretive panels

\*Powered paraglider have been seen on the Refuge and are a concern as they disturb wildlife. Matt Hillman has received reports and is aware of the issue.

\*Dave Williams reported on the very successful boat trips made by Capt. Paul Aziz on the Yankee Clipper with volunteer naturalists from the Friends and Matt Poole from the staff. He suggested that the Friends co-sponsor a future trip(s).

#### 4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer: Lynette Leka sent her report ahead and commented that there have been no major changes in our financial position or membership. We will be able to meet our commitment for the internship program.

A discussion of our donation to the internship program in 2021 followed as the funds were not spent. It was moved and voted to carry over the \$6,000 allocated but not spent in 2021 to 2022. Matt Hillman and the staff will decide on exactly how to use these funds, i.e length of internship, number of interns, etc. with the understanding that the intern(s) work on maintenance, education and research.

B. President: Bill Gette reported on current work group projects at headquarters, i.e. building a picnic table and replacing the boardwalk at the Visitor Center rear entrance. Matt Poole's project list is very helpful in planning and implementing work projects.

Doug Chickering reported that the first board at the Bill Forward blind is gone. Matt Poole will see that it is replaced asap.

MaryMargaret agreed to monitor the Hellcat boardwalk for fall debris that poses a hazard. If necessary the Board will consider holding a clean-up.

5. Technology Report: Weston noted new articles added to the website homepage. Bill, Dave, Peg and Cheryl will send new articles.

6. Board Membership: Bill asked all members and associates to confirm their interest in remaining or serving on the Board in 2022 as well as in any Board positions.

7. New Plank Project: Board members were asked to send Ted Olsson comments on the drafts of an application and a flyer sent previous to the meeting. The Board agreed that people on the wait list from a past plank project should be contacted before this project is officially launched. As for the launch, as soon as Bill checks on availability of materials at Headquarters, the flyer can be posted and emailed. Mary Margaret offered to ask the Chamber of Commerce to be a corporate member.

8. Beach Clean Up: Members signed up to help as follows: 10:30 - 12 Doug; 12 - 1:30 Ted; 3 - 4 Lynette. Requests for help will go to members (Lynette), and the Charter School (Bill) and Ted will send a PSA to the Daily News.

#### 10. Educational Programs

Introduction to Birding. Bill reported that 35 attended. Peg Gould volunteered to serve as host for future virtual programs.

StoryWalk: Ted reported that on Oct. 12 the StoryWalk begins. There are about 25, 2 page signs. It will stay up for a month. After it comes down, the Board will discuss the project and determine whether or not to continue it and, if so what changes or additions might be needed.

Pop-Up-Swallows: Doug and MaryMargaret have done this program and will report dates to Bill.

#### 12. Confirmation of Next Meeting Dates:

Oct. 6 @ 6:30 and Nov. 10 @6:30

Bill asked that members send agenda items ahead of each meeting.

#### 13. Other business

\*Doug requested storage at Headquarters for the Purple Martin colony equipment

\*There have been numerous requests from birders for a dawn Refuge opening. Matt Hillman said that hours will remain sunrise to sunset.

\*Doug asked about an area in front of the Bill Forward Blind where mown paths seem to lead visitors to the marsh. Matt Hillman will check on this.

\*Winter Birding Challenge: MaryMargaret and Dave will review the rules and make any needed recommendations. Bill will send them copies of the rules.

13: Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

#### Action Items:

\*Ted will send Matt Poole information on the Story Walk

- \*Matt Poole will see that the board at the Bill Forward blind is replaced.
- \*MaryMargaret will monitor the Hellcat boardwalk for debris.
- \*Dave, Peg, Cheryl and Bill will send Weston articles for the website.
- \*All members will let Bill know if they want to continue on the Board in 2022.
- \*All members will reply to Ted's email regarding drafts of the Plank Project flyer and application.
- \*Bill will check planks at Headquarters.
- \*Lynette will contact people on the Plank Project wait list.
- \*MaryMargaret will contact the Chamber regarding a corporate membership.
- \*Beach Clean-Up Volunteers: 10:30 - 12 Doug; 12 - 1:30 Ted; 3 - 4 Lynette.
- \*Beach Clean-Up invites - Lynette to members; Bill to Charter School; Ted to Daily News.
- \*Bill will send Winter Birding Challenge rules to MaryMargaret and Dave