



Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021 7:00 p.m. Remote via Zoom

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

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by President Bill Gette.
2. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the Nov. 10, 2021 meeting were accepted.
3. Refuge Staff Update. Matt Poole reported as follows.
 - *The hiring process for Denice LaCroix's replacement has begun.
 - *Members who contributed articles to the "Wrackline" were thanked for their help. The issue will come out in January and can be accessed from the Parker River homepage under *publications and news*.
 - *On Dec. 26 the Mass. Audubon Christmas Count will be held at Parker River. The Great Bay Count will be Dec. 18.
 - *The new Refuge website will become active as of Jan. 3, 2022 and will evolve during the winter.
 - *There are two up-coming public programs: "Into the Canyon," a film on Dec. 16 @ 7 p.m. and a winter photo class on Dec. 17 @ 1:00.
 - *Matt Hillman added that Brian, a staff member, will be on paternity leave.

4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer's Report. Lynette sent out her report ahead of the meeting. She also sent a report of a forthcoming \$2,500 gift from the Rodigrass-Weare Foundation for the internship program. Bill announced that a \$5,000 grant from the Stine Foundation was received and other grants are expected. He added that our excellent financial position means that in the coming year we will

be able to determine how to best allocate these resources for the benefit of the Refuge. There are currently 266 members.

B. President's Report. The Wed. work group has been busy. Recent projects include:

- *installing planks on the Pines Trail
- *installing markers along the Hellcat Boardwalk
- *Hellcat Trail maintenance

Bill suggested installing a few orientation signs to help visitors understand and use the Hellcat Trail markers. He and Matt Poole will discuss this.

*The slate of Board members for the Annual Meeting election is complete with the addition of Dan Graovac. Dan explained that he is a Plum Island resident, and frequent Refuge visitor. He spoke briefly about his service with the Merrimac Valley Watershed Council. He has served as president of the board.

C. Technology Report. Weston noted that he has updated all plug-ins and apps on the website and has received and put up new content from board members/associates. He encouraged others to submit articles and photos. Doug Chickering will send his annual license plate count.

5. Annual Meeting Planning. The Annual Meeting will be held on Jan. 22 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. The program will consist of reports from the president, treasurer, secretary and refuge manager. Bill shared his draft PowerPoint. Ellie and Lynette will send the ballot to members for pre-meeting voting and will tabulate the results.

6. Pines Trail Plank Project. So far \$5,100 has been received for memorial planks with 23 planks installed on the Pine Trail boardwalk. Ted will check with Lynette on an invoice from CNC and Bill and Matt H. will discuss ordering more planks. Bill encouraged the Board to spread the word about this on-going project.

7. Winter Birding Challenge. After a brief discussion of proposed changes to the rules and prizes for this event, two subcommittees were formed. Ted and Dan will develop a public relations and marketing strategy that increases and broadens participation. Bill and Dave will finalize the rules/prizes.

8. Friends Articles and Publicity. Board members have submitted pieces to the website (Peg Gould on the Tufted Titmouse and Cheryl Smith on wildflowers) and the "Wrackline." (Bill on Friends' activities and Doug on fall shorebirds.)

9. Educational Program Calendar. Bill reminded Doug to submit a report on his "Pop-up" education programs.

10. Urban Wildlife Conservation Program. Ted Olsson is our point person on this initiative. He has attended a very informative training and will now meet with Matt H. to further discuss this initiative.

11. Confirmation of Next Meeting Dates

Wed. Jan. 19 @ Preparation for Annual Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.
Sat. Jan. 22 @ Annual Meeting @10 a.m.

13. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Action Items

- *Bill and Matt P. will discuss orientation signage for the Hellcat numbering system.
- *Bill and Matt H. will discuss ordering more planks.
- *Ted will check with Lynette on the invoice from CNC.
- *Ellie will work with Lynette on election/Annual Meeting details.
- *Dan and Ted will develop a public relations/marketing strategy for the Winter Birding Challenge.
- *Dave and Bill will finalize the rules and prizes for the Winter Birding Challenge.
- *Doug will send his "Pop-up" data to Bill.
- *Ted will meet with Matt H. to discuss the Urban Wildlife Program.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Bailey
Secretary