



Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, April 13, 2022 7:00 p.m. Remote via Zoom

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

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by President Bill Gette.
2. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the March 16, 2022 meeting were accepted. Action items from that meeting have been accomplished or in progress. Dan Graovac will present his adopt a boardwalk proposal at the May meeting.
3. Refuge Staff Update. Matt Hillman reported as follows:
 - *Hybrid board meetings will be a possibility as soon as technology has been installed in the conference room.
 - *There is great interest in helping the Refuge among students at Newburyport High School. The Friends are encouraged to reach out to NHS.
 - *Planks have been delivered to Dover. Brian of the maintenance staff is available to help with transporting them.
 - *Refuge staff are working on new bike racks and a shade structure.
 - *Matt is writing a column on the great work volunteers are doing at the Refuge.
 - *Matt is working with the Merrimac Valley Watershed Council.

The Board then reconsidered Matt's suggestion from the last meeting regarding applying for a grant to support a 30th anniversary celebration at Great Bay. Bill initially suggested requesting \$500 with a \$100 match and/or in-kind (volunteer hours) contribution. After a brief discussion, it was moved and voted to apply for the grant but only offer an in-kind match.

Matt Poole reported that:

*Let's Go Outside will be held on Sat., June 25 and will be coordinated by Ella Weber. Matt suggested that the Friends have a joint station with Jane Kelly of the live raptor demonstrations. We will discuss this at the May meeting.

*April 22 and 23 there will be Earth Day programs. Jane Kelly and the raptors will be at Parker River on the 23 and at Great Bay there will be a bike tour on the 22.

*From law enforcement (Gareth Williams) a message to please report any concerning human behavior seen on the Refuge by calling the Refuge/administration desk (978-465-5753) &/or stopping at the gate house. Photos of license plates can be sent via email.

4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer. Lynette sent her report ahead of the meeting but reported on highlights:

*The Friends have received another \$1,000 donation.

*Lynette has sent a check for the summer internship to Mass. Audubon, hence our balance in that fund has dropped.

*Our net to date from the Pines Trail fund raiser is \$5,500.

*We have 267 members with 11 new ones and 8 non-renewals.

*Lynette will be purchasing plants for the pollinator garden as needed.

B. President. Bill reported on the following:

*The Wed. Morning Work Group has finished the "summer cottage," i.e., storage shed for the gate house.

*The beach clean-up was a "huge success" with a large turnout and enough volunteers to remove much of the accumulated sand from the Lot #1 boardwalk.

*The mowing of phragmites at the Bill Forward Blind and along the road by Stage Island Pool consists of a total of 10 acres. The Essex County Mosquito Control District can do the work for \$455/acre, or a total of \$5,250. Discussion brought out the fact that this would be an annual expense and that there is no Refuge plan for eradicating the phragmites. Further discussion centered on ways to raise funds to continue this project after this year., especially from those who will benefit from enhanced viewing opportunities and might want to keep their views open. It was moved and voted to accept the Essex County Mosquito Control District's proposal for mowing for this year.

C. Technology. Weston reported on new postings on the website (an article on the salt marsh from Peg and new photos of the Wed. Work Group from Bill.). He encouraged all to contribute. Posting a map of the Refuge was suggested. Matt Poole will send Weston an updated map to post.

5. Planning for Friends Volunteer Projects: Bill reported that the Pines Trail will need maintenance later on and that the Wed. Work Group will build new cabinets at the gate house. Planks will arrive in late May or early June and will be installed. Members were encouraged to submit project ideas.

7. Purple Martin Project: Doug reported that the Purple Martins have arrived and he is preparing the gourds.

8. Educational Program Calendar

*Neil Hayward - EBird (April 28)

*Introduction to Bird Watching (June 3 lecture & June 5 field trip)

*Lowell's boatshop - TBD

9. Confirmation of Next Board Meeting Dates

* Wed., May 11 @ 7:00

* Wed., June 29 @ 7:00

10. Other Business: Dan will draft a letter to our legislator in support of the current bill to control the use of rodenticides.

11. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:34.

Action Items

*Dan will talk with Lynette and then present his proposal for the adopt a boardwalk program at the next meeting.

*Bill will revise the grant proposal for the Great Bay 30th and send it in.

*Matt will send Weston an up to date map of the Refuge and Weston will post it to the website.

*Members will send Bill any ideas for maintenance projects.

*Bill will include discussion of Friends' participation in Let's Go Outside on June 25 in the Agenda for the May meeting.

*Dan will draft a letter to our legislator in support of the current bill to control the use of rodenticides