



Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting Thurs., Nov 17, 2022 7:00 p.m. Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, secretary; Doug Chickering, vice president; Weston Forsblad; Bill Gette, president; Dan Graovac; Peg Gould; Ted Olsson; Dave Williams; Scott Milan; Ella Weber, refuge visitor services manager.

Absent: Lynette Leka.

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by President Bill Gette.

2. Secretary's Report: The minutes of the Oct. 26 meeting were accepted. A review of action items indicated that most were in progress, had been completed or would be discussed later.

3. Refuge Staff Update: Ella Weber reported as follows.

*The deer hunt at Parker River will be Dec. 2 & 3. The Refuge will be closed on those days. The closure will be posted on the Refuge website but to alert birders and other visitors, Dan and Ted will post information on the hunt on social media, and Ella will let Mass. Audubon know.

*The additional EV charging station project is underway. Ella expects a quote on installation at several sites. She has applied for a grant to support this project.

*Staff news includes one hiring, a new Hispanic Access Foundation intern to work mainly in Lawrence and the temporary loss of a biotech staffer who will be out for training.

*Ted will lead a review of the Partnership Agreement.

*The staff's internal planning will be in Jan.

*Ella has received requests for memorial benches and asked about Friends' involvement with them. After a brief discussion, Bill suggested that the Friends' sponsor one or two more benches on the marsh section of the new Hellcat boardwalk. Ella will follow up on this. She will also talk with Lynette about past donations for memorial benches. There was a suggestion that guidelines for memorials be set. (Lynette later reported that - "Friends email also received frequent requests for memorial benches and/or plaques. My understanding from Jean Adams, and what I communicate to the senders of the requests, is that 1) the refuge has determined that there is no space for more benches, and 2) all memorials are limited to former staff and long-time volunteers. So these restrictions need to be clarified by the refuge staff before proceeding..."

4. Board Reports

A. Treasurer. Lynette sent her report ahead. Bill noted that the Friends financial condition is excellent and that he will note our 2023 commitments at the Annual Meeting.

B President. Bill reported that the Wed. work group has done trail maintenance at Hunting Area B and on the Stockyard Road trail. At the Dec. meeting, we will review his PowerPoint for the Annual Meeting.

5. Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held on Jan. 21 at 10:00 via Zoom. The format will be a business meeting followed by a presentation. Dan agreed to speak on photographing the Refuge, a 20 minute talk featuring his photography. Lynette will handle the Board election prior to the meeting.

6. Nominating Committee: Dave Williams reported that the slate will be announced at the Dec. meeting. He sent the Board a draft of a letter from the Nominating Committee to members prior to the meeting. The letter informs members about Board service as either a regular or associate member and invites those interested to contact the Nominating Committee.

7. Pines Trail Plank Project: The final batch of planks will be completed the week of Nov. 28 and picked up and installed the following week. There are 159 orders for a very successful fundraiser.

8. Procurement of Additional Charging Stations. This project was discussed earlier but Ella added that the Refuge's share for the original charging station was \$8,500.

9. Plum Island Lighthouse Project: Ted Olsson reported that the initial meeting will be Nov. 29 at 10 a.m. It will be in-person at the Visitor Center auditorium with a Zoom link for remote participation.

10 Winter Birding Challenge: Bill announced that there will be four categories with one prize for the winner in each. Otherwise the rules will be the same. There will be a table at the Visitor

Center prior to the event with promotional materials and more on-line publicity. Bill will update challenge materials for a final review in Dec.

11. Educational Program Calendar: Suggests for future program topics included sparrows, nests, winter raptors, and a poetry open mike night. Regarding the latter, there was a discussion of resuming in-person, indoor programming. Ella stated that these programs are allowed at the Visitor Center as long as county covid levels remain low. As not all members are able to participate in-person, presenting hybrid programs was brought up. The matter was not resolved.

12. Conformation of Meeting Dates:

Wed., Dec. 14 @ 7:00 p.m, regular Board meeting

Wed., Jan. 18 @ 7:00 p.m., walk-through for Annual Meeting

Sat., Jan 21 @ 10:00 a.m. Annual Meeting

13. Other Business: Ella will check on placing iron ranger boxes at Lot 1 and Hellcat for donations to the Friends.

14. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Action Items

*Weston, Dan and Ted will post the deer hunt information on social media/website.

*Ted will review the Partnership Agreement.

*Ella will discuss placing additional benches in “bump outs” along the marsh trail with the staff.

*Ella will talk with Lynette about past memorial bench donations.

*The Nominating Committee will complete their slate for the Dec. meeting.

*Dan will create a 20 minute talk featuring his Refuge photography.

*Bill will update Winter Birding Challenge materials for a final review in Dec.

*Ella will check on placing iron ranger boxes at Lot 1 and Hellcat for donations to the Friends.