

Jericho Underhill Land Trust monthly meeting – April 4, 2022

Board members present via Zoom: John Koier, Phyl Newbeck, Lisa Paone, Livy Strong, and Hilaire Thomas

Livy Strong called the meeting to order at 7:03.

1. Review of minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of March 2022 were approved.

2. Financial Report

In March we took in \$12,042 consisting of \$1,480 in memberships, \$7,400 in contributions for the Davis Farm, and \$3,162 for Riverside Meadow. We spent a whopping \$201,2533 of which \$200,00 was for Riverside Meadow, \$1,208 was for legal fees for the Charron property, \$75 for recording fees for the Charron property, and \$250 for membership dues. Hilaire moved \$30,000 from savings to checking in preparation of the Mobbs Farm funds coming due.

Taxes for Riverside Meadow are very high (\$5,534 last year). It is considered a Grade 2 property, rather than Grade 1 because the land is level, and it has a scenic view. We can appeal the assessment or ask the residents of Jericho to make vote at Town Meeting on whether to make it a tax-exempt property. The property is too small to go into current use. It was noted that our attorney, Anna Vaserstein was very generous with her time on the project.

Our total assets are \$1,408,747 consisting of \$1,185,487 in fixed assets, \$92,222 at New England Federal Credit Union, \$11,198 in our money market account, \$70,884 in our checking account, \$28,569 in Schwab investments, \$11,188 at the Vermont Community Loan Fund and \$9,197 at the Vermont Community Foundation.

3. Fundraising, membership

A lot of our year-end giving went to the Riverside and Davis projects which meant that money wasn't going to our organization. We've taken a bit of a hit from that fundraising, but Livy is confident we'll catch up.

4. Land Stewardship

John Koier walked Wolfrun with Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper on March 22. It was the first time he had been on this property. Beavers are still active at Moose Pond. The lodge had been added to and dam built up raising the pond level by a couple of feet. The land bridge culvert is not plugged yet, but John fears it will be.

John walked the Mazza property on April 4 and took many pictures per USDA/NRCS Danny Peet's instructions. Danny was unable to join since he had a broken ankle. John will submit the pictures to him with a description.

5. Land projects

We closed on Riverside Meadow and Mobbs Farm is very close to being finalized. The Select Board will discuss it at a meeting on April 7. All that is needed is for the Selectboard to sign and pick a closing date. We've raised the \$50,000 we need for the Davis Farm, so we won't need to get any money from the Jericho Conservation Fund.

Hilaire suggested sending cards to everyone who donated to the Davis and Riverside Meadow properties so Lisa, Livy and Hilaire prepared roughly 100 cards which will be sent out after we publicize the closings. We are also considering listing all the donors who did not ask to remain anonymous, either in the Mountain Gazette or the newsletter or both.

John spoke to Amy Golodetz of the Underhill Conservation Commission who said the old Underhill Ski Bowl which is over 100 acres might be for sale. We don't have a lot of information about it. Some history of the land is available at <https://www.nelsap.org/vt/underhill.html>

6. Publicity

Livy wants to get the good news about Riverside Meadow out. It will be in our newsletter and on Facebook, Instagram, Front Porch Forum, and the Mountain Gazette. Diana Dunn will help us get it out on mailchimp and Ecopixel will help us update our website accordingly.

Roger Frey suggested we have a historical marker off Route 15 to commemorate the site of the Browns' cabin. They were the original settlers of Jericho. He will work with Gary Irish on this. The plaque will be at the pull-off on Route 15 although the original site of the cabin wasn't close to the road.

7. Events

Our spring wildflower walk will be May 7 at 10 at Mills Riverside Park with Michele Tulis. She will talk about the history of the native plants and their medicinal value. On May 12, Evergreen Erb will give her bird slide show which will be in person at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library and on Zoom and on May 14 will be the bird walk at 7 am. Both the slide show and the walk will have registration through the library.

We have an Abenaki gathering agreement with Chief Don Stevens. The Abenaki are allowed to harvest certain plants with hand tools. Livy told Chief Stevens about some of the archeological finds at Gateway, Wolfrun, and Kikas Valley Farm. Livy will walk with him on April 13, but there are questions about parking for Wolfrun.

8. Any other business

John wanted to know if we should take a hiatus on invasive species removal on our properties since it doesn't look like we will be getting any grant money. We spent roughly \$8,000 last year and should probably make a decision by May 1 if we want to hire Will again. There may be money from a CD which is coming due. Hilaire will roll over part of it.

Meeting adjourned at 7:450

Respectfully submitted,
Phyl Newbeck, JULT Secretary