

JULT Annual Meeting – October 2, 2024

Board members: Sabina Ernst, John Koier, Michael Lazorchak, Phyl Newbeck, Lisa Paone, Livy Strong

Members present: David Arioldi, Jean Archibald, Tom Baribault, Carolyn Wadhams Bennett, Juri and Irene Bihun, Eric Bishop, Barb and Bruce Blockland, Nancy Carey, Lisa Carmichael, Anne Cramer, Wendell Davis, Christine Dimon, Ellen and Bruce Eccleston, Sabina Ernst, Andrew Fitzgerald, Nancy Galagher, Dave Ganter, Amy Golodetz, Rob and Rindi Gordon, Bob and Donna Hamill, Marie and Brian Harnett, Mary Hill, Essie Howe, Alec Jacobson, Brett Kincaid, Barbie Koier, Jess LaPlante, Carolyn Leighton, Bob Linde, Ed and Louise Matthews, Marianne Menger, Mary Neighbours, Louanne Nielsen, Clark Orsky, Ed Paone, Donna Pratt, Margaret and Rich Rushlow, Pat Sabalis, John, Julie and Tobias Schroeder, Chris and Dan Smith, Sheldon Smith, Kim Spaulding, Loren Strong, Randy Trover, Thomas Vogelmann, Deborah Waterman, Steve Webster, Cathy Weymouth, Charlotte and Bill Wheeler, Paul Yanus

Livy Strong called the meeting to order at 7:00

Livy introduced the board members. Phyl Newbeck is the secretary, Lisa Paone is the new treasurer, Sabina Ernst, is our resident naturalist, John Koier heads the land stewardship committee, and Michael Lazorchak is our legal expert. Hilaire Thomas and John Connell were unable to attend. She noted that we are a small all-volunteer land trust with a fantastic community that supports land conservation. We need membership monies to operate.

This year our main land conservation project was the Hunt Farm on Lee River Road which has a rich heritage of farming. Martha Prince worked with us because she believed her parents would have wanted the land to be conserved. We got federal, state, and municipal funding from the town of Jericho, as well as donations from members. The 52 acres will be owned by five people who all have a history of farming. They are moving into the Hunt farm with one couple on the first floor and one on the second floor. They will have chickens, a farmstand, and a native plant nursery. They have always leased land for their agricultural endeavors, but this is the first time they've owned land.

Another major project from a year ago was the Riverside Meadow which was 17 years in the making. It's the property right before Mills Riverside Park. The family developing the land agreed not to build houses in the meadow, which would have blocked the view of the park and would have kept us from getting secondary access to the park. We had to raise \$200,000 in three months and were able to do it. The 12-acre parcel will remain a hayfield and we will continue to have a secondary entrance to Mills Riverside Park for maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Lisa gave the financial report as of September 30. Our annual income to date totals \$44,706 and our expenses have been \$40,742. Our net worth is \$1,408,611 which includes fixed assets of \$1,187,502 as well as bank accounts.

John Koier gave a land stewardship report. Since the summer of 2018 we've been working on invasive plant removal – mostly Japanese barberry - at Kikas Valley Farm. We have used the

Intervale nursery and Will Dunkling of Trout Lily Forestry Services for the work. This season we were able to complete another five acres of removal. We have concentrated on the areas with the heaviest infestation and are seeing some real improvement.

John noted that the July storm which flooded large portions of Vermont washed out the beaver dam at Wolfrun Natural Area and also covered our beaver exclusions fence with debris. It needs to be cleared but it still works. We also updated our management plan for Wolfrun with the help of our forester, Allan Thompson.

Lastly, we nailed down the implementation of riparian shrub plantings along the stream that flows through the ten-acre pasture along Skunk Hollow Road. This project will be completed in the spring and will be done with government funding. The Blades family has been grazing their cows on the land for 30 years, but it is uncertain if they will be returning. If they don't, we will look for another farmer to use the property.

Livy answered some questions about the conservation of the Hunt Farm, explaining JULT's role and how it will be in perpetuity. She also answered questions about our criteria for land conservation and our plans for the future. She noted that we are dependent on assistance from Vermont Land Trust because we are too small an organization to hold easements.

Livy introduced our guest speaker Jaclyn Corneau of Vermont Fish and Wildlife who gave a presentation on living with black bears.

Respectfully submitted, Phyl Newbeck