

Jericho Underhill Land Trust monthly meeting – January 8, 2024

Board members present: John Connell, Sabina Ernst, John Koier, Phyl Newbeck, and Livy Strong

Livy called the meeting to order at 7:01.

1. Review of minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of December 2023 were approved.

2. Financial report

Lisa provided the financial report prior to the meeting. Our total assets are \$1,364,674 consisting of \$1,187,502 in fixed assets, \$5,036 (one-year term) and \$88,619 (two-year term) at New England Federal Credit Union, \$11,204 in our money market account, \$88,223 in our checking account, \$28,932 in Schwab investments, \$11,528 at the Vermont Community Loan Fund and \$11,528 at the Vermont Community Foundation.

In December we took in \$7,725 in memberships. We spent \$55,000 in closing costs for the Davis Farm conservation, \$108 to take the farmers from the Farm Upstream to lunch, \$45 for office expenses and \$30 for subscriptions.

3. Membership and year-end giving

Livy said that we have seven or eight new members. We have sent out the thank you notes for all recent donations. Livy thinks donations were down a bit because we had big projects in previous years and Lisa has noticed that some regular contributors are giving less than in previous years. Livy noted that we have had some additional expenses like the Davis assessments and some assistance for the Farm Upstream. She said membership rises and falls depending on whether we have land projects.

4. Land projects

The tentative closing date for the Davis Farm is January 23.

5. Land stewardship

John Koier reported that Dicky Streeter was able to clear our beaver exclusion fence of the debris that was deposited in July from the flooding event which washed out the Moose Pond beaver dam at Wolfrun Natural Area. Recently beavers have returned to the pond and have been at work on both the dam and a new lodge.

John has been talking with Danny Peet and Dave Adams of NRCS and Vermont Fish and Wildlife respectively regarding some financial help for our continuing forestry efforts at Kikas

Valley Farm. This could be a lengthy process. He is bringing our new forester into the loop to fine tune our existing Forest Management Plan to better position ourselves to get an EQIP grant.

Paul Mazza isn't meeting our requirements for proper erosion control at Kikas Valley Farm. It's been a rough year for Paul as he was terribly affected by the July flooding of the Winooski River. Sabina is trying to get guidance so that we can do more to protect water quality. She wonders if we should be the ones applying for grants, rather than Paul.

Livy would like us to provide some information on the new Kikas Valley Farm kiosk including a QR code for a trail map. Sabina would like a sign asking people to keep their dogs leashed. We have a sign dating back to 2005 with rules. John Koier suggested a sign with information about Paul's farming operation.

Michael has offered to apply for a grant which would help us with capacity building and possibly allow us to hire a facilitator for our strategic plan.

6. Publicity

Sabina wrote about the black bear presentation which took place at our annual meeting and that will be part of our next newsletter.

7. Community news

The draft Jericho Town Plan was approved in December.

8. Any other business

John Koier reported that Underhill is following Jericho's lead in trying to set up a food hub.

John and John will build four birdhouses for Mills Riverside Park.

Our next meeting will be February 5 via Zoom.

The meeting concluded at 7:40

Respectfully submitted,
Phyl Newbeck, JULT Secretary