

Jericho Underhill Land Trust monthly meeting – April 1, 2024

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

Livy called the meeting to order at 7:02.

1. Review of minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of March 2024 were approved.

2. Financial report

Lisa provided the financial report prior to the meeting. Our total assets are \$1,374,364 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, \$11,205 in our money market account, \$88,619 in our checking account, \$28,932 in Schwab investments, \$11,528 at the Vermont Community Loan Fund and \$8,896 at the Vermont Community Foundation.

In March we took in \$144 in memberships. We spent \$2,489 consisting of \$45 for office expenses, \$832 for Kikas Valley Farm property taxes, \$30 for subscriptions, \$725 in membership dues for the Land Trust Alliance, \$299 for Wolfrun Natural Area property taxes, and \$559 for Riverside Meadow property taxes.

Lisa noted that we have two new members.

Lisa said Sheryl Leslie now has access to our bank account.

There was some discussion about how to get new members. Livy ordered 50 extra copies of our spring newsletter and Lisa dropped some off at Jericho Ale and Bean. Livy is also hoping that we can have a booth at the farmers' market to further engage with the community. Typically, when a newsletter goes out, we get a rash of memberships which covers the cost of printing and mailing.

3. Land stewardship

John Koier said we are in the process of trying to get a grant for forestry management at Kikas Valley Farm. We updated the forest management plan for the state of Vermont and Dave Adams, the person to whom it was submitted is the person will be submitting the grant.

Sabina had some correspondence about our CREPS project at the 10-acre pasture with Phil Wilson of NRCS. They will do some flagging on April 11 and on April 22 they will start planting. They are bringing plants and have some others which they got from the Intervale at no additional cost. Phil won't be installing the fence until we know whether the cows (or some other ruminants) are coming back. The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District will be involved with the planting, and they asked us to look for additional volunteers. Sabina suggested using MailChimp to find volunteers. She can provide the text for the email. Another group,

Friends of the Winooski River, is also interested in helping with planting, possibly further along the stream. This would be the fall of 2024 or the spring of 2025.

Sabina also talked to Phil Wilson about farm buffers for Kikas Valley. We had previously questioned whether we should take responsibility for making the improvements rather than waiting for Paul Mazza. Phil would be able to help with that, but we would have to speak to Paul to explain what we are doing. His farm acreage will shift a bit because of the work so it is probably best to have it in writing.

Sabina will put postcards in neighbor's boxes, so they aren't concerned when they see work being done on land adjoining the property. Livy thinks the newsletter could be added to that postcard so we might be able to get new members.

Sabina talked to Phil about language to post to see if anyone wants to bring sheep to our pasture. Livy talked to Bob Naylor who has abutting land and he recommended not getting sheep. Bob also volunteered to post on Front Porch Forum that the pasture is available once we hear whether Norma will be bringing the cows this year.

John and Livy talked to Randi Roy who has lots of skills including GPS.

Sabina said the Trail Committee – now known as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Committee – is printing paper maps and was going to put something on the new kiosk to hold the maps. They want to upload everything to an app like AllTrails. The only caveat is the trails must have names. Sabina noted that there is currently a trail that peters off and doesn't go anywhere. Sabina may also add a sign about coexisting with bears.

4. Land projects

We will put the “this land is conserved forever” signs up in June.

Livy asked John K and C if they had any extra birdhouses for the park.

5. Publicity

The spring newsletter just came out.

6. Events

We will have our annual wildflower and bird walks. This year we will skip the library part of the presentation.

7. Community news

Michael said that we were removed from the Demarest appeal so even if he is successful, we will not be part of any further litigation. Demarest ran for Select Board and lost but Underhill will be adding two new members in June.

Sabina got an email from the Girl Scout leader. They are looking for a place for the troop to plant a tree. She wasn't sure if there was an appropriate place at Mills Riverside Park for an oak tree.

Sabina is in the process of organizing a talk for the Conservation Commission regarding a Vermont film called *Seeing the Forest for the Trees* which discusses the current use program and the benefits to the economy of forestland. It's a 30-minute video with Vermont experts. She is hoping to have a showing of the video and have Ethan Tapper and Don Tobi be available for a post-movie presentation. She would like to be able to tell JULT members about it. The goal is to have it as a dinner meeting with pizza so it can't be at the library.

John Connell said there will be a celebration on May 12 for the Underhill Town Forest. There will also be an Underhill Potato Project on the Chamberlain Farm, growing potatoes with community help on a specified plot of land. So far, they haven't decided what to do with the potatoes, but they might go to needy folks in the community and/or the food shelf.

8. Officer elections

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the board agreed to have Livy continue as Chair, John Koier as Vice Chair, Lisa as Treasurer, and Phyl as Secretary.

9. Future meetings in person

The board was split on whether to continue meeting via Zoom or in person. We'll decide as we get closer to the May meeting.

Our next meeting will be May 6

The meeting concluded at 7:50

Respectfully submitted,
Phyl Newbeck, JULT Secretary