

JULT Annual Meeting – May 7, 2026
Jericho Community Center

Livy Strong called the meeting to order at 7:02.

Members present: John Connell, Sabina Ernst, Barbie Koier, John Koier, Michael Lazorchak, Phyl Newbeck, Kim Spaulding, Paddy Reagan, Jeff Salisbury, Laura Senan, Livy Strong, Emily Tomkins, Michelle Tulis

JULT President Livy Strong introduced the JULT Board members: Vice Chair John Koier, Secretary Phyl Newbeck, Michael Lazorchak, John Connell, and Sabina Ernst. Lisa Paone was unable to attend.

Livy invited guests to attend our monthly meetings on the first Monday of every month. She passed around our annual Profit and Loss statement for 2025 which showed that we had revenue of \$119,912 from a combination of memberships, fundraising, grants, and other gifts received. We spent \$27,850 consisting of accounting, advertising, insurance, invasive removal, property taxes, office supplies, subscriptions, and supplies giving us a net revenue of \$90,565 for the year. It is important for us to have money on hand because land projects often come up quickly with little time to fundraise. Additionally, we need to do work on the land that we own outright.

We are working to conserve 100 acres of the Rawson farm in Jericho. The total amount raised was \$825,000. We received \$20,000 from members and got \$20,000 from the Jericho Conservation Reserve Fund. Other money came from grants from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and NCRS. We're waiting for VLT to work out a few details but expect to close on the land soon. After this is completed, we will work on conserving the 200 acres of the property in Underhill.

We are talking to other landowners about how to conserve land. This is time consuming work. It took 17 years to conserve Tomasi Meadow, and it took four years to conserve the Davis Farm. When you are permanently protecting land you want to do it right. You need to make sure the conservation easement is detailed but not too much to eliminate future uses which might be appropriate.

John Koier gave the stewardship report. He has been on the Board for at least 20 years and has been working with Sabina on stewardship issues. JULT continues in our mission to plant riparian buffer strips along the streams that border our Kikas Valley Farm property. Thanks to the Friends of The Winooski, the Intervale Plant Nursery and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this spring were able to create another section of buffer along the SW portion of the stream which flows directly down the hill to the Winooski River. This will enable us to capture most of the agricultural runoff from the farm fields, stop erosion, and provide choice habitat for migrating songbirds. All this work was provided to our organization at no cost to us.

We are seeing a great diversity of wildlife at Kikas Valley because of the beaver activity that started in the summer of 2024. In addition to the many amphibians, wood ducks, mallards and red winged black birds have been sighted recently. We got a USDA grant and completed a 10-acre timber stand improvement last year with a focus on providing healthier habitat for songbirds.

We have provided two educational workshops for the residents of the Wingate development and the general public; one on beaver activity and another on the benefit and implementation of stream buffer strips. There will be more effort this summer in the ongoing management of invasives, particularly Japanese barberry. We are still hoping to get some matching funds from USDA.

Mills Riverside Park celebrated its 25th anniversary last year and we had a nice celebration with beautiful weather. Since then, we conserved the meadow in the foreground between the park and Route 15. We raised the money in a very short period of time with half coming from funds we already had. Gary Davis is haying the property and the hay is certified organic.

Michelle Tulis led a wildflower walk last Saturday and we have a bird walk coming up, both at Mills Riverside Park. We keep our members informed about these events through seasonal newsletters and our website and also send out information via MailChimp. We are looking for more ways to engage the community. We've had a good year.

We are all volunteers with no office or overhead and we are always looking for more members.

Upon a motion, duly made and seconded, Michael Lazorchak was reelected to a three-year term on the JULT Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 and Livy introduced Craig Newman of Outreach for Earth Stewardship.