

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM via Zoom by Chairperson Rich Dionne

Members Present: Rich Dionne, Leslie Bowen, Mike Lamoureux, Gregg Devlin, & Joe Pedro

Members Absent: Mike Scurka, and Cameron Genereux

Guests: none

- 1) Approval of prior meeting's Minutes:** Motion was made to accept the November meeting minutes
(There was no meeting in December 2020)

(Motion by Mike Lamoureux; Seconded by Gregg Devlin - passed unanimously)

2) Nipmuc Trail: The "No Hunting" signs have been removed, and are stored in Rich's garage. During the Nov 1st - Dec 31st hunting period 28 permits were issued: 13 Burrillville residents, 6 RI (non-Burrillville) residents, and 9 out-of-state residents. A future date will be set to walk the property to see if any tree stands have been left behind. Thank you to DPW for clearing the parking area after the previous snow storm, at Rich's request. We may need to rake or grade the area in the spring in the event the melted snow piles may leave behind some dirt piles or debris. Rich spoke with property abutter Mike Jones and he had no issues to report. URI Eco-System student Lakin Ganoe completed the trail camera study. The cameras picked up some fischer cat activity, as well as a 6 point buck. Mike L has researched the idea of adding a small plaque, approximately 3"x4", on each interpretive marker post. Each plaque would contain the name & graphic of the item in that location, and possibly a QR code to scan, which would pull up the trail pamphlet. Prices for two options from East Coast Artisans are as follows:

PVC: \$104 for the plaques + \$50 = \$154 total

Aluminium: \$156 for the plaques + \$50 = \$206 total

Rich has shared the idea via email with Martha Thuman, who is helping to reevaluate the current interpretive trail guide for accuracy. She and Rich have already walked the trail to reestablish the marker locations, except for 1 or 2, which will be address once the vegetation returns in the spring. Some of the classroom benches are in need of repair or replacement, as 2 have broken due to decomposition. This project will need to be addressed this spring or summer. We also need to consider adding trail water bars going down to the river.

- 3) Gateway Welcome Sign/ Rt 102:** Rich will request a maintenance invoice from Esposito's Landscaping for the 2021 spring/summer maintenance season.

4) Wallum Lake Canoe Launch: Joe reported the water level at 584.5, which is where it should be for this time of year. There has been a lot of use for ice fishing. Joe spotted a couple of otters prior to the ice forming, as well as an eagle.

5) Spring Projects: Rich spoke with Mike Wood and confirmed that spring programs not tied to and event can proceed. These include: Gateway maintenance, Watershed Project, trail maintenance, Arbor Day tree planting. Rich will talk with Christine regarding Earth Day.

6) Watershed Watch Program: This will be the last season that Bruce Tancrede will oversee the Spring Lake water monitoring for the Watershed Watch program. We will need to find a new individual to oversee the water collection for this program starting next spring.

7) Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Proposal: Level funding has been requested for fiscal year 2022

8) Reappointments/Resignations: The following members are seeking reappointment: Leslie Bowen, Gregg Devlin, and Jose Pedro. Mike Scurka has indicated he will be resigning. The commission members expressed their appreciation for his years of service and contributions as a commission member.

9) Invoices/Mail Received: Letter from RIDEM Water Resources regarding a homeowner on Pascoag Reservoir that wishes to construct a dock, stone wall, patio, & fire pit that will affect approximately 1,700 square feet of fresh water wetlands. Rich will make contact with Joe Raymond to schedule a visit to the Bethany Lane property. Also received was a brochure from Audubon of MA, communication from "Voices of the Earth" nature poems, and Christmas cards from Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, and Representative David Cicilline.

9) Adjournment: 7:52 PM (motion made by Joe Pedro; seconded by Mike Lamourex - passed unanimously)