

Hogback Mountain Conservation Association (HMCA) Board Meeting 2020_06_29 Minutes

The meeting was held virtually, online. In attendance: Diana Todd, Jack Widness, Pieter van Loon, Carol Berner, Nancy Anderson, Sarah RobbGrieco, Francie Marbury

- Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm
- Officially acknowledged
 - that Oct and January meeting minutes have been approved by email
 - that the April meeting was cancelled
- Board membership
 - Francie re-elected to a second 3-year term - Nancy moved, Pieter seconded
 - Discussion of recruiting new Directors (HMCA currently has 7; can have 9)
 - **Nancy and Francie will revisit the names they generated in the fall** and consider contacting potentially interested persons. Jaime Tanner mentioned as someone to talk to.
 - HPC also needs new members (currently has 5; can have 7). HPC membership is complicated by the need for balance of Marlboro and non-Marlboro residents. Amanda Whiting mentioned as possible HPC member but would need to balance with another Marlboro resident.
 - Recruit new Kiosk Manager - still needed
- Treasurer's report - see financial statement
 - clarified that HMCA budget is on calendar year
 - HMCA has received the \$5,000 bequest from Bob Engel's estate and has invested it in a CD.
 - Nancy reported that the Marlboro Trustees for Public Funds are just getting organized. The HMCA Finance Committee has offered to meet with them to share background about the Hogback endowment.
- Impact of corona virus on 2020 plans
 - Postpone 10th year anniversary events until next year
 - No indoor Summer Meeting with evening speaker
 - No on-mountain group programs
 - What criteria would we use to restart programs? Jack reported that the SVNHM is holding an in-person meeting following state guidelines. He pointed out that there is a clear sense of urgency to hold this meeting. We do not have a sense of urgency.
 - Agreed we should continue as we have been doing in terms of not issuing guidance on trail use at Hogback.
 - Should we offer self-guided programs/events?
 - We have not heard a demand for this.
 - At this point there is not a point person with the energy to pursue this.
 - Is trail maintenance needed?
 - This is the purview of the Trails Committee
 - Noted that ferns on the Cross Mountain trail likely need to be weed-whacked
 - Rim Run Trail needs water bars
 - **Diana will divide up the trails and assign each of us trails to inspect for needed maintenance**
 - What can/should we do regarding invasive plants this year?
 - agreed to revisit sites where invasive plants have been removed in the past - **Diana will put together a map and recruit Directors to check specific sites.**

- Jack mentioned that I Naturalist might be a good tool for recognizing invasive plants.
 - Ed Metcalf has mentioned concern about potential invasives on Old Hogback Rd
 - Pieter reports that there is not much that can be done about invasives along Rte 9 without collaboration with the AOT
 - Nancy said that BEEC had a successful volunteer event to remove invasives
- Reports
 - Bird banding activity by Eric Slayton, first use of new Facility Use Agreement process
 - Jack & Pieter observed banding one morning.
 - Sarah reported she has observed the banding project three times, along with her children, and highly recommends Eric as a program presenter
 - Bird banding may continue with fall migration
 - EAB and survey tree
 - There are 2 traps out which Pieter is monitoring
 - Signage near kiosks is helpful
 - Survey/lure tree has been set up well away from trails
 - ATV use/illegal trail near true Hogback summit
 - Not clear who created trail
 - **Jack will contact the Wilmington Trails Committee to see if they share our concern and have info.**
 - Pieter says that VLT has signs we can get to discourage ATV's; **Diana will contact Jennifer Garrett, the Regional Stewardship Manager for this area.**
 - Recommended to put up signs at boundaries so that people are aware when they are entering conservation land and that ATV use is not allowed.
 - Invasive Wild Chervil removal on Rim Run trail (near Cons Area boundary)
 - 90-100 pounds removed from site abutting the conservation area
 - Thank you to Pieter, Jack, Diana, and Mike!
 - Management Plan update is once again stalled
 - Getting necessary public input has been complicated by COVID
- Do we need a policy statement re: programs
 - The strawman document covers program planning *procedures* (not policy). Policy is the mission as articulated in the Management Plan and Conservation Agreement. This draft doc is the "how to" about how we go about putting together a schedule of events.
 - Diana drafted the strawman, received feedback, and developed new draft which was accepted with thanks.
 - Publicity/promotion Procedures will be kept as a separate document.
 - Discussion of how best to store our documents. They are currently in Drop Box. **Sarah and Diana will work to determine if this is the best platform.**
- Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Minutes recorded by Francie Marbury.