

EMTI Minutes

Monday, March 10, 2014

Present: Mary Stone, Rick Hopkins, David Webb, Nona Estrin, Richard Brock, Sue Chickering

We decided to skip over the minutes for tonight's meeting.

We are moving our meetings to the first Monday of every other month, but since we are so busy at this moment, we are going to meet every month for a while at 7:00 pm at the Four Corners School. We will meet next month on April 7th, unless it is not available.

Grassroots grant:

Another grant opportunity turned up. Ginny Callan works for Grassroots, an organization that provides support through seed money that can be used for any number of projects. There maybe \$1000-2000 we can get through this source. We need to take a closer look at our funding sources so that we have a steady income through a variety of sources. One idea might be to create a "Friends of East Montpelier" made up of people who would like to contribute on a regular basis. An alternative would be to put an item in the Town Meeting articles to request money from the town.

Miscellaneous stuff:

On another note, Virginia and Nona have volunteered to look at the map and make sure that the map matches the actual layout and determine what needs to be done to remedy the situation. In light of the conversation regarding bikes on trails in the winter, Virginia suggested that we should revisit this issue when she and Nona look at the map and the trails to determine if we want to change any of our access. This walk will accomplish two goals. They will also take the "walk through" checklist on their walk and make sure that the form is still relevant and that it covers everything we might need to do to repair or maintain the trail. In the future, we should ask our trail stewards to communicate the things that need attention to us in a timely manner at least once a year or by a particular date that we set. Sharon Plumb can no longer be on the committee as she is too busy with her job at the Vermont Land Trust. She would still like to help us out. She offered to organize a Pot Luck for the trail stewards – to recognize their efforts and reboot these efforts. Mary suggested that we have this pot luck in June. Rick is the steward of the Town Forest section. The Katlins are the stewards for the Mallory Brook trail. Charles Johnson will be the steward for the existing section from Wheeler Road to U32. Note: Brett Leeper (who manages the trails at Morse Farm) may be interested in being a member of the board and/or taking stewardship of a trail and the question was raised if he could be if he didn't live in town. Richard read the bylaws and it is fine for people to be on the board who do NOT live in East Montpelier.

Sparrow Farm Trail:

Last fall we showed some interest in the plastic panels, wondering if we want to work with MAMBA. If we choose to go this route we would have to need to put in fill or something that would support these panels. It seemed like an enormous project to do this way, removing all of the wood and getting permits

to put in fill, etc. So, MAMBA is willing to work with EMTI to just replace the boards as they need replacing. MAMBA is offering to do the labor, and EMTI will try to come up with the funding. Rick estimates that the cost would only be \$100-200 a year. Rick will get in touch with the powers that be and scope out the situation and make a determination of how much \$ we will be looking at. Mary will speak with Greg Western about this situation with the boardwalk in case he has some other ideas.

Betsy Austin (of Esther's Rock) would hope that we will put a bench beside Esther's Rock. Rick will speak with Paul Cate about this and Paul will give us an estimate of what this would cost.

FYI - Vermont Walk/Bike Summit is happening on March 29th, and 30th in Burlington. It looks to be a more urban event than a trail event.

Continuation of our Organizational Assessment discussion: (we left off after 3f)

4. Conflicts of interest:

a. Do we have a conflict of interest policy? NO

We should develop a conflict of interest Policy. There are examples on the Land Trust Alliance website for us to check out.

b. Board Compensation –board members are not compensated, or if they are they are compensated on a reasonable basis. N/A

c. Transactions with insiders – Have we ever acquired land or easements from an insider? NO

5. Fundraising:

a. Do we solicit from out of state people? NO

b. Accountability to donors – we merely send a thank you letter. "No goods or services were received in exchange for this donation" should be added to this letter. We also recognize people who have made donations if they choose to be acknowledged. In general people who support our organization don't ask for our 501 non-profit number. We should keep track of our donations – dates and funds. Mary has a file of all the various donors and the amounts and who they are from.

c. Accurate representations – the funds are used for the purposes identified. YES

6. Annual Budget:

a. Do we have a budget? NO

We do file an IRS Form 990s – electronically. We are always under the threshold to having to declare any funds. Since our expenses are so minimal (approximately \$4,000 because of the flood.

b.,c. Financial Records/Financial Statement – our Treasurer keeps track of our expenditures, etc and reports these out on a regular basis YES

d. Have we ever had an audit? NO

Since the amounts we use are peanuts anyway, we have never had a need for this.

e. Internal System for handling money: YES

f. Do we have any investment funds? YES, and we keep track of this CD

i. Risk Management and Insurance:

Do we have liability insurance? NO

7. Volunteer staff and consultants: THIS AREA COULD USE IMPROVEMENT

We need to recruit more volunteers and board directors YES

h. Working with consultants/contractors – we are OK with this one YES

8. Evaluating and selecting conservation projects:

a. Do we have a strategic trail plan and do we work with other organizations? YES

b. Project selection criteria is based on the town plan with the goal to create a loop, and is this written down somewhere? NO (THIS NEEDS ATTENTION and we should write down our criteria)

c. We co-hold easements with the town and/or Vermont Land Trust. We should make a list of these easements (THIS NEEDS our attention). These should be in a fire safe with a backup somewhere (except for the fact that we are not the sole holders of this easements).

Recordkeeping: see above

e. Site inspection YES