

York River Stewardship Committee

Minutes for the October 29, 2024 Meeting via Zoom (Special Meeting)

Voting Members Present: Karen Arsenault, Allan Cawrse, Sally Harold, Karl Honkonen, Joan LeBlanc (Chair), David Marshall, Mary Marshall, Susie Rice, Judy Spiller

Other Committee Members Present: Beth Cromwell (Alt), Paul Dest (Wells Reserve), Emma Lord (NPS), Jim MacCartney (NPS), Jenn Hunter (coordinator)

1. Welcome: Joan LeBlanc opened the meeting at 12:02 and welcomed everyone to this special meeting convened to discuss an important business item that was time sensitive and couldn't wait until our next regular meeting on November 26.

2. Funding Request from Great Works Regional Land Trust to Support Conservation

Easement Purchase: All committee members received detailed information by email from Joan regarding a request from Great Works Regional Land Trust seeking funds to purchase a conservation easement on a large farm in Eliot, which is 127.5 acres along the York River. The request was for \$20,000 from our Committee to cover the remaining funding gap to complete the project. A Purchase and Sale Agreement was signed on September 18th and is due to expire on December 16th.

Background: Jenn provided some more background information on the history of the project, its location and its importance. She noted that in addition to the importance of the approximate 1.5 miles of tidal shoreline to be protected, it also was one of the sites for the archeological survey in 2017 for the York River Study Committee, in which the family actively participated. It would be our first project in Eliot.

Discussion: Joan asked for input from the Committee. Allan was the first to acknowledge that he thought this was an excellent project for us to be involved with, as did the rest of the group. There was consensus that this was the type of project the committee should be funding. In addition, Karl wanted to make sure that we publicize this project and was very interested in viewing the property, but not as a condition of the award.

Allan made a motion, seconded by Judy, to award \$20,000 to the Great Works Regional Land Trust to complete the conservation easement purchase for the parcel including 127.5 acres along the York River in Eliot. Mary Marshall recused herself from voting due to the fact that her family owns property adjacent to this property. All members that were voting were in support of the award to GWRLT.

3. Public Comments: Jenna Gilbert from Eliot joined the meeting near its conclusion to learn more about the Committee after seeing the meeting notice. Members encouraged Jenna to attend a regular meeting in the future and Jenn planned to follow up with Jenna by email.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35.

Approved: November 26, 2024