

LCHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 27, 2014

Department of Resources and Economic Development

FINAL Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Voting Members: Doug Cole, Cynthia Copeland, Martha Fuller Clark, Julia Steed Mawson, Amanda Merrill, Bill Norton, Charles Royce, Judith Spang

Non-voting members: Jennifer Gornertt, John Kanter, Beth Muzzey, Jeff Rose, Paul Susca

WELCOME Jeff Rose, Commissioner of the Department of Resources and Economic Development, introduced himself and welcomed us to DRED

MINUTES Paul Susca's conflict stated at the December Board meeting was with Piscataquog Land Conservancy not the Francestown Land Trust, as written in the December minutes.

MOTION by Judith Spang:	To accept December, 2013 minutes as amended
SECOND:	Charlie Royce
VOTE:	Unanimous in favor

CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORMS The LCHIP Conflict of Interest Policy (adopted by LCHIP Board of Directors in 2001 and incorporated in to the September 2013 *Financial Policies and Procedures Manual*) requires that all Board members submit a conflict of interest statement each year at the January Annual Meeting, as well as also disclosing relationships to projects. Following discussion of what information was required, board members in attendance completed the form and returned them to Office Manager Melissa Jones.

CONTACT LIST Julia Steed Mawson and Judith Spang had corrections to our master contact list for the LCHIP board.

DECEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

MOTION by Charlie Royce:	To approve the December Financial Report as presented
SECOND:	Julia Steed Mawson
VOTE:	Unanimous in favor

TRUST FUND REPORT No updated figure for income to the Trust Fund in January because of staffing shortage at Treasury Department.

AUDIT Although the Board approved the audit as drafted at the September meeting, Harold Janeway belatedly saw the need for a change in one of the notes to reflect the change in LCHIP's

position in the current biennium because the dedicated fee money is all allocated to LCHIP. Dijit, with Doug's approval, had recommended a change but feels that the Board should approve the revised audit. The sole change to what was approved in September is the following addition: "The State's biennial budget for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 assigns the full income from the surcharge to the Authority for grant making and other costs. This represents a dramatic improvement in support for the Authority and virtually assures the strength of the program for the current biennium."

MOTION by Martha Fuller Clark: To accept the revised audit.
SECOND: Judith Spang
VOTE: Unanimous in favor

CCE UPDATE Part of LCHIP's enabling legislation is designed to insure that properties protected with state funds through LCHIP are properly cared for over time. LCHIP sets aside money in the "community conservation endowment" (CCE) for this purpose for each completed project. Annually since 2009, LCHIP has disbursed a payment from the CCE as an incentive to the grant recipients who had submitted an acceptable and timely monitoring report about their projects. As of the most recent report, the market value of the fund is about \$2.9 million. Staff seeks Board approval to disburse to the appropriate grant recipients at the same amount as last year, \$200 per unit. (A unit is a measure of the difficulty of properly stewarding a property. Each property is assigned 1 to 4 units based on formulae in the CGP.) The total cost to LCHIP of a \$200 per unit disbursement for this year would be \$52,600. The Council on Resources and Development also must authorize this expenditure.

MOTION by Charlie Royce: The LCHIP Board of Directors endorses expenditure of \$200 per payout, or \$52, 600, from LCHIP Community Conservation Endowment in payment for acceptable, timely monitoring for calendar year 2013.
SECOND: Julia Steed Mawson
VOTE: Unanimous in favor

Cynthia reported that a member of the public questioned LCHIP stewardship of a historic property which appears run down. The property in question is past the term of its stewardship agreement, so LCHIP no longer has legal rights to it, but it still has an LCHIP sign. Cynthia requests that we discuss this issue at a future Board meeting.

PROJECTS COMPLETED SINCE LAST MEETING The Board packet contained a summary of the eight projects that were completed between September 1 and December 31, 2013. Martha asked if there have ever been projects which couldn't raise the required match. Dijit said almost all projects achieve their match, but especially with the grant amount is less than requested (especially 2012), some recipients need more time to raise the larger match. So the Board is sometimes asked to give an extension. One project from the previous grant round regretfully declined the partial grant, feeling that they would not be able to raise the match in the needed time frame.

Doug asked about timing of payments. Dijit explained that Natural Resource projects get all of their money at the time of closing when they have completed LCHIP-required due diligence. Historic Resource projects get funding in three installments: 50% when due diligence is approved; 30% when the project is 50% complete and the final 20% when the project is completed and the stewardship agreement signed and recorded.

Beth asked about tracking jobs created. Dijit has been tracking this back to Grant Round 6, basing the information on the project budget in the application. Martha requested that the jobs created be added to the information provided about projects completed during each time period.

ANNUAL REPORT Dijit passed around copies of the latest Annual Report created by the LCHIP staff and presented, as required, to the Governor & Council.

WHITTIER BRIDGE UPDATE Amy reviewed the lengthy history of this project which was originally awarded a grant in 2007 and has requested and been granted five extensions. The project now has a completion date of May 6th, 2014.

MOTION by Julia Steed Mawson: To grant the Whittier Covered Bridge project an extension until December 31, 2014.

SECOND: Martha Fuller Clark

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

STAR ISLAND Amy passed around a photo book created by Star Island as a thank you to all their major donors including LCHIP

REVIEW OF GRANT ROUND 12 Dijit reported that LCHIP staff called all 75 applicants after the grant round decision. She made all of the calls to the non-funded applicants. There were only a couple of extremely disappointed people. She described the “press event” in early January as a celebration of recipients. Dijit, Amy and Jess will be meeting with those who didn’t receive grants in the upcoming weeks. Applicants appreciate the effort and it helps them if they want to reapply.

Further comments and questions for future grant rounds

- One page descriptions of each project were more useful to most than the full applications
 - These will be provided in the future
 - Review panel will still see and read entire applications
 - Board members may receive full applications upon request
- Both review panels should follow same ranking categories
- Staff impressions from site visits are helpful and could be provided in more detail than ↑ and ↓
- Should grant writing workshop include an explicit warning that not all projects get funding?
- Should applicants be warned that they are unlikely to get funding if they have not made progress with grants from an earlier grant round?

REBRANDING The Outreach/Rebranding Committee (Beth, Rusty, Julia, Doug and Dijit) met with four firms to discuss public relations. They are requesting revised proposals from two of them, with more specific committee input. The growing sense is that the focus should be on increasing public understanding of LCHIP rather than a change to LCHIP's name or logo.

Additional ideas and questions about public outreach (some from Board and some from the consultants)

- Make friends with county registrars, real estate and banking communities so they will speak positively about the LCHIP fee to their clients – perhaps create LCHIP fact sheet to be distributed at closings
- Video materials on our website and circulated by recipients in project areas
- What is the life expectancy of videos or other new materials?
- Make name memorable by playing with “chip”
- Consistency in use of logo
- Methods by which grant recipients (our primary stakeholders) communicate about LCHIP
- Poster campaign – make something memorable (and salable?) for each county or each year
- (Theme) map(s) of accessible LCHIP-protected sites similar to DAMF specialty tours
- Website information about what LCHIP sites have trails, parking, bathrooms
 - Info could be collected in application or as part of due diligence of funded projects

LTA STANDARDS & PRACTICES Dijit reviewed LCHIP compliance with elements of Standards 7 & 8 concerning ‘Volunteers, Staff and Consultants’ and ‘Evaluating and Selecting Conservation Projects’. LCHIP practices are very close to those suggested, with modest need for improvement in detailed written documentation of employee duties and minor updates to Employee Handbook. In response to a question about staffing levels, Dijit responded that we are OK with the current level for now but in the future additional staff may be needed.

Conservation New Hampshire's **GREEN EGGS AND NEW HAM (P) SHIRE BREAKFAST**, scheduled for Wednesday morning is a great opportunity for networking and a hearty free breakfast of local food

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE As shown in the Board packet, there are fewer than a dozen bills of interest/concern to LCHIP this session. Martha has submitted a CACR to limit raiding of dedicated funds

There being no other business, public comments or need for executive session, the meeting adjourned at 4:50.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Cole
LCHIP Board Chair

Melissa Jones
LCHIP Office Manager