

# Land and Community Heritage Investment Program

## Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting

Doug Cole, Board Chair

New Hampshire State Library 10 Park Street, Concord NH

Monday, September 23, 2013 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

### Draft Minutes

#### ATTENDANCE

Voting members: Doug Cole, David Hess, Harold Janeway, Mandy Merrill, Bill Norton, Julia Steed Mawson, Charlie Royce

Non-voting members: Tracey Boisvert (OEP), Susan Francher (DRED), Beth Muzzey (DHR), Pierce Rigrod (DES)

Staff: Jess Charpentier, Amy Dixon; Melissa Jones, Dijit Taylor

Guests: John Hession and Stacey Lannon (Hession and Pare audit firm), Shannon Whitehead (for Senator Jeanie Forrester)

#### MINUTES OF JULY MEETING

MOTION: Julia Steed Mawson moved to accept the minutes of the July meeting as presented

SECOND: Mandy Merrill

VOTE: Approved unanimously

**MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS FOR FY '14** were reviewed. No changes requested.

#### FINANCIAL

##### Audit

John Hession distributed draft copies of the audit and presented highlights of the financial information, explaining areas where there were notable changes from the previous year.

Everything went smoothly: no deficiencies identified in LCHIP's internal controls, no difficulties in performing the audit, no material misstatements, no disagreements with management, no issues noted. Stacey presented the Management Letter, which indicated that the LCHIP has improved procedures identified in last year's audit with regard to credit card use, end of month closing and bank reconciliation. Financial oversight has been improved by the Board decision to create a Finance Committee. Additional issues to be addressed in the coming year concern completeness of some personnel files and written information about financial policies and procedures. John said that our financial reporting has been accurate and complete during the year.

MOTION: by Charlie Royce to approve the audit as presented.

SECOND: Julia Steed Mawson

VOTE: Approved unanimously

MOTION: by Mandy Merrill to **accept the August financial report** as presented in meeting materials

SECOND: Julia Steed Mawson

VOTE: Approved unanimously

#### Financial Policy and Procedures Manual

Dijit provided a quick review of the background of the document, which was sent with the meeting materials. It was inspired by a previous auditor who noted that LCHIP followed good financial management procedures but lacked written documentation of the procedures. Some sections are drawn verbatim from existing policy; others have been created or revised. Dave Hess, the Finance

Committee member who has been most involved in the creation and evolution of the proposed *Financial Policy and Procedures Manual*, reviewed some of the areas in the proposed policy where Board input was needed to finalize. The sense of the meeting was to review the document every three years, reduce petty cash from \$100 to \$50, seek annual conflict of interest statements from staff (as well as Board) and eliminate the debit card that has not been used for three years.

MOTION: by Bill Norton to accept the *Financial Policies and Procedures Manual* with the changes agreed to above  
SECOND: Julia Steed Mawson  
VOTE: Approved unanimously

**Investment Policy** – the proposed investment policy remains a work in progress and will be brought to the Board for discussion and possible adoption at a later date.

### **Income Available for Grant Round**

The state budget includes \$4.1 million in income from the registry fees that support LCHIP grants. LCHIP's recent past practice has largely been to distribute only money that is already in hand. By December this will be about \$2 million. Should the amount granted be the budgeted amount or the amount in hand: Outcomes of a lively discussion:

- Treasury MUST provide info re actual versus budgeted income
- Confirm with Treasury whether it is allowable to award anticipated/budgeted income
- Analyze how soon after awards money is "typically" distributed
- Make final decision at December meeting with the above information in hand

### **Rebranding/Outreach**

Dijit reported that proposals from four different firms have been received, with prices ranging from \$5000 to \$10,000+. Doug states that the intent is to conduct private fundraising for the costs. Mandy and Harold both express misgivings about changing name or logo and would prefer to see focus on better communication with key audiences. Julia clarifies that the rebranding activity may be misnamed and that it can easily include improved PR. Beth and Julia volunteer to join Doug, Rusty and Dijit in interviewing the four firms. The project will then return to Board for further action.

### **STAFF UPDATES AND ACTION ITEMS**

There were no Board questions about the **projects closed in July and August**, shown in materials sent prior to the Board meeting

**Workshop at "Exploring a Sense of Place" Conference** – Julia reported that she and Dijit presented a workshop about nature activities on LCHIP-protected properties at a recent conference for Nature-based Early Childhood Educators. Julia saw this as an opportunity to inform an unusual audience about LCHIP properties and their availability for public use. Workshop participants were largely unfamiliar with LCHIP-protected properties but were very enthusiastic about those that they were told about. Additional information about properties in different parts of the state that have family-friendly visitor accessibility (trails, parking areas, bathrooms etc). could be compiled by Board members or possibly an intern for use on the website or at other public events. Susan expressed caution about directing the public toward easement protected properties that lack amenities.

**New Natural Resource Project Signs** – Jess displayed the new signs, which come in a large and small size, feature the logo in full color and no longer include the property name. Sixty new signs have been purchased for all the natural resource projects through Grant Round 11.

**Extension request for Johnson Farm and Islands, Monroe**

- MOTION: Harold moved to extend the completion deadline for the Johnson Farm and Island project in Monroe to December 2014.
- SECOND: Julia Steed Mawson
- VOTE: Approved unanimously

**Grant Round 12 Preview**

The current grant round includes 74 applications (20 natural resource protecting 6000 acres, 54 historic resources in 64 municipalities and all 10 counties) seeking a total of \$7.7 million with total project value of \$25.7 million. CDs of applications are being provided to Board members to facilitate their review. Staff has started reading the applications. A few are underwhelming, perhaps because some applicants did not attend the grant writing workshop.

**Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices (5-6)\***

As a continuation of the ongoing review of the congruence between LCHIP policies and Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices, Dijit summarized the information concerning Fundraising and Financial Asset Management distributed with meeting materials. LCHIP policies are in good agreement with the LTA standards in most of these topic areas. One more will be met once the Finance Committee completes and the Board accepts an investment policy.

One of the policies pertains to donations. LCHIP is not a federal 501[c] organization and there has never been clarity about whether donations to LCHIP are or are not tax deductible, Dijit recently has learned more from Department of Justice about how the tax-deductible status of LCHIP might be clarified. The Board encouraged her to pursue that.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

With only one of the four legislative members attending this meeting, and this early in the legislative year, there is little to report on upcoming legislation. Rep. Bishop has filed an LSR about public entities owning conservation land.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- Beth, whose Division of Historic Resources is a section of the Department of Cultural Resources, thanks the Board for coming to the state library, one of the Department of Cultural Resources treasured holdings.
- Charlie recently attended a tour of projects in Frankestown that are seeking LCHIP funds. The town has received LCHIP funding in the past and is enthusiastic about the program.

Public Comments - none

The meeting adjourned at 4:35

Next meeting: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday, December 16, 2013  
New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, Concord

Submitted by:

Approved by:

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Melissa Jones  
LCHIP Office Manager

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Doug Cole  
LCHIP Board Chair