



Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting

Via Zoom

Amanda Merrill, Board Chair

Monday, June 22, 2020

Approved at August 17, 2020 Board Meeting

Introduction and Explanation

Mandy Merrill called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and read an explanation (See addendum) of how the meeting accommodated right-to-know requirements under Governor Sununu's State of Emergency proclamation including that the meeting was being recorded and that all votes would be taken by roll call.

Attendance

Dijit took attendance by roll call with attendees stating what interest they represent on the board and if anyone else was in the room with them. All attendees were alone.

Voting members: Colin Cabot, Doug Cole, Chick Colony, Rich Cook, Martha Fuller Clark, Dick Lewis, Mandy Merrill, Susan Slack, Judith Spang, Ben Wilcox

Nonvoting members: Susan Francher, Jim Oehler, Pierce Rigrod, Stephen Walker, Ben Wilson

LCHIP Staff: Barb Beers, Paula Bellemore, George Born, Kristen Powell, Dijit Taylor

Meeting Guidelines

Dijit reviewed operating procedures for this virtual meeting including the need to state name before speaking, and phone versus video participation.

Minutes of January 27, 2020 BOD Meeting

There were no changes to the minutes.

MOTION	To approve the minutes from the January 27, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting.	Martha Fuller Clark
SECOND		Colin Cabot
VOTE		Approved with 8 in favor; Dick Lewis abstained; Chick Colony not yet present

Proposed meeting schedule for FY 2021

Meeting type and/or location will be determined by COVID cases and safety recommendations.

Proposed Date	Time	Anticipated Format/ Location
Mon., Aug 17, 2020	2-4:30 p.m.	Likely Zoom
Tues., Oct 20, 2020	All day	NHF&G?
Mon., Jan. 25, 2021	2-4:30 p.m.	Likely Zoom
Mon. Mar.22, 2021	2-4:30 p.m.	Likely Zoom
Mon. June 28, 2021	2-4:30 p.m.	TBD

Board contact info

No changes were requested for contact information provided in the Board Packet.

Board member terms expiring

Current Board terms for Colin Cabot and Mandy Merrill will expire in September 2020. Colin expressed interest in continuing and will file the appropriate paperwork. Mandy is still considering what she would like to do and will let Dijit know.

Financial Topics

Bookkeeping/accounting services are still in flux following the death of Jim Marshall early in the year. Dijit has been writing checks by hand while Fran Marshall has been entering payments into QuickBooks off site. Dijit is in conversation with a different accounting service provider.

April Finance Report

Because of flux in accounting services, the April Finance report includes only April YTD income and expense. There were no questions or changes.

MOTION	To accept the April 2020 Finance Report.	Dick Lewis
SECOND		Doug Cole
VOTE		Approved unanimously

Fund updates

Trust Fund Income YTD = \$4,174,649 (same month previous year = \$3,409,728)

May CCE Market Value= \$5,404,796 (May 2019 = \$4,703,496)

Doug asked about money available for grants this year. Dijit responded it's hard to predict: YTD registry fee income is up over FY 19, but may dip with ongoing COVID-19-driven economic impacts.

Proposed Administrative budget for FY 2021

Ben Wilcox thanked the finance committee for their work and reviewed the proposed administrative budget that was included in the board packet. Income projections: Moose plate holding steady (capped) at \$200,000; Trust Fund interest \$73,000 (half of FY 20 Trust Fund income); Trust Fund transfer at 5% of budgeted \$3.5M grants (includes \$28K to Reserve Funds); \$12K from CCE income to cover some costs of NR seasonal and HR assistant.

Expenses were discussed thoroughly by the finance committee. Ben provided a summary to the Board. Collectively salaries increased 3% based on market conditions, change in duties, skills, and education. Finance Committee felt the proposed budget was conservative, but fair.

Kristen was asked to leave the meeting during the discussion so her position and salary could be discussed freely. Kristen was originally hired as 2019 historic resources intern but was kept on in a new temporary position of historic resource assistant. The high numbers of open HR projects explain the need for this position. Out of respect for the State's hiring freeze, Dijit is choosing to keep Kristen as a temporary employee at this time. Dijit confirmed that a temporary employee does not receive benefits.

Communications shows a decrease because we have given up the plan to put a display at the Hooksett information center. Bookkeeping costs are expected to increase with a new provider

learning LCHIP systems. The annual payment to DOJ is set by DOJ based on the average amount of time they spent on LCHIP requests in the previous biennium. Signage has increased to restock supply of signs for natural resource projects.

MOTION	To approve the proposed \$462,455 budget for FY 2021.	Doug Cole
SECOND		Judith Spang
VOTE		Approved unanimously

Proposal to retain Hession & Pare for FY 2020 audit

The Finance Committee recommends retaining Hession and Pare for the RSA-required LCHIP annual audit. The firm has been conducting the audit since FY 2012, but three different site workers have provided fresh eyes on the financial records. Having someone familiar with the organization perform the audit following the loss of the longtime bookkeeper seems desirable.

MOTION	To retain Hession and Pare Certified Public Accountants to conduct LCHIP's FY 20 audit.	Martha Fuller Clark
SECOND		Colin Cabot
VOTE		Approved unanimously

Insured Cash Sweep account

Dijit reported setbacks and progress toward establishing an insured cash sweep account for the large amounts being held by LCHIP for grant payments.

Action Items

DOT Query DOT requests that LCHIP release ~12 acres to allow for a full realignment of approximately 1.3 miles of NH Rte. 16 in Cambridge beside the Androscoggin River. The highway passes through the 13-Mile Woods Community Forest, a 1,700-acre conservation area protected with LCHIP assistance in 2005 and 2009. The request follows a discussion about the potential shift of NH Rte. 16 at the March 2019 LCHIP board meeting. At that time, DOT was considering four alternative solutions to roadway problems caused by low elevation and proximity to the river. The alternative DOT has selected as preferred is the one with the greatest impact on conserved land. RSA 227-M:13 provides guidance about highway projects for which LCHIP can and cannot release its conservation interests.

When DOT makes a request to obtain interest in land protected with LCHIP assistance, LCHIP must hold a public hearing within 90 days. LCHIP can hold its public hearing in conjunction with one to be held by DOT. Within fifteen days of the public hearing, the LCHIP Board must vote to approve or deny the request, unless DOT asks for an extension. The DOT hearing is scheduled for the first week in August. The August Board meeting date was set to accommodate both the DOT hearing and the need to vote on this issue within a specified time frame. Accepting that DOT has made a request to release conservation interests held by LCHIP does not mean that LCHIP had determined that the request is one the RSA permits LCHIP to accept. That decision pends the public hearing and final Board discussion and vote at next meeting.

MOTION	To accept the request from DOT to release ~12 acres of land in the 13-Mile Wood Community Forest conserved with LCHIP assistance and to hold a joint public hearing with NHDOT on the proposal to relocate 1.3 miles of NH Rte. 16 in those acres.	Ben Wilcox
SECOND		Susan Slack
VOTE		Approved unanimously

Judith expressed interest in the type of information to be posted on the legislative calendar once the joint public hearing is scheduled. Dijit and Judith agreed to be in communication about this.

Project Extensions

The Francestown Beehive is a full rehabilitation project including structural repairs, window restoration, roof replacement, clapboard repairs and updates to the building’s HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems. The physical work is complete, remaining items include all closing documentation. An extension beyond the current deadline of July 31, 2020 requires the Board to make an exception to the 54-month completion requirement in the current extension policy. The grant recipient has not requested an extension, but LCHIP staff believe they will need one.

MOTION	To add the Francestown Beehive extension request to the consent calendar.	Susan Slack
SECOND		Doug Cole
VOTE		Approved unanimously

The Board packet included details of the projects and extension requests summarized below. Vote was taken in consent calendar format with the opportunity to discuss as needed.

Town Award Date	Project Name	Project Summary	Current Completion Deadline	Remaining Work	Requested Extension
Danbury 2015	South Danbury Church	Full rehabilitation	6/30/2020 (54 months)	Closing documentation	12/31/2020
Deerfield 2017	Marston	Phase 2: Acquisition of 128 acres by Town of Deerfield	6/30/2020 (30 months)	Town Meeting vote to acquire 128 acres	6/30/2021
Francestown 2015	Francestown Beehive	full rehabilitation	7/31/2020 (55 months)	Closing documentation	12/31/2020
Hampton 2015	James House	Exterior stabilization	7/31/2020 (55 months)	Window and door frames, replacing sheathing on half of back, staining and closing documentation	6/30/2021
Milton 2015	Plummer Homestead	Installation of new drainage	6/30/2020 (54 months)	Complete installation of drainage and closing documentation	12/31/2020
Salisbury 2017	Childs	Conservation Easement on 547 acres	6/30/2020 (30 months)	Completion of required documentation	6/30/2021

MOTION	To accept all extensions requests as proposed on Request for Action in Board Packet	Susan Slack
SECOND		Martha Fuller Clark
VOTE		Approved unanimously

Information Items

Current Grant Round update – All applications are being submitted electronically and are due by 5 p.m. on June 26. Site visits will change due to COVID-19: the standard will be one review

panelist, one LCHIP staff member and one project proponent per site. Dijit will not attend all site visits as she has in the past.

Non-funded meetings – 16 of 22 applicants that did not get funding in 2019 chose to meet with LCHIP staff to review their project and get feedback on improving their application.

Walker withdrawal was on the agenda but no information was provided at the meeting.

CCE payments – A memo in the Board packet provided a summary of how \$87,200 from the LCHIP Community Conservation Endowment fund was distributed.

CGP revisions have been delayed because of the shelter in place order.

Projects Completed January – May 2020 were included in the Board packet.

Recreational users have expressed concerns about public access at Rossvie Farm, a land conservation project accomplished with LCHIP assistance in 2007. DNCR holds a conservation easement and has sent the land owner a letter articulating concerns. As secondary executory interest holder, LCHIP supports the actions of DNCR.

Legislation of Interest to LCHIP

Senator Fuller Clark and Representative Spang reported that, given the dramatic changes brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, none of the three bills of interest to LCHIP in the current legislative session will pass.

SB 493-FN-A, to increase the registry of deeds fee that supports LCHIP grants from \$25 to \$35 and create a committee to study the economic impact of land conservation on housing prices has been tabled.

SB 617-FN, to create a voluntary \$10 increase to the registry of deeds fee that supports LCHIP grants was determined inexpedient to legislate.

SB 638-FN to establish a New Hampshire housing and conservation planning program was sent to interim study.

Other Business - None

Public Comments – None

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm

Next Meeting: Monday August 17, 2020 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara A. Beers
LCHIP Office Manager

Amanda Merrill
LCHIP Board Chair

Addendum

LCHIP Board Chair, Amanda Merrill read the following at the start of the meeting:

As Chair of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-929-205-6099, meeting ID 810-1789-2099 and password 830958.

Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program at: LCHIP.org

b) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem, please call or text (603) 224-4113 or email at: officemgr@lchip.org

c) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

Let's start the meeting by taking attendance with a roll call. Dijit will read the Board list. When each member states their presence, please tell what interest you represent on the board and state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law. The meeting is being recorded. Any members of the public who wish to comment on the meeting can do so at the "Public Comments" section at the end of the agenda.