

Lake Roland Nature Council
Board of Directors Meeting
December 16, 2020
MINUTES

Members Present: Kurt Davis, Peter Lev, Howdy Knipp, Lydia Redding, Jeffrey Budnitz, Beth Hoker, Siobhan Budnitz, Dwight Johnson, Gero Verheyen, Jim Flannery, Steve Bruno, Siobhan O'Brien Budnitz, Christine Corbitt, Marc Klein, Carlton Sexton, Rick North

Other Attendees: Ranger Jonathan Wood, Kay McConnell, Elliott Plack

President Kurt Davis called to meeting to order at 6:30.

Kurt asked new members Steve Bruno, McKay Jenkins, and Siobhan Budnitz to introduce themselves to the group.

Treasurer's report:

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings 45,823.07

Total Current Assets 45,823.07

Fixed Assets 431,684.98

TOTAL ASSETS 477,508.05

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Total Current Liabilities 79,484.00

Total Liabilities 79,484.00

Equity 398,024.05

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 477,508.05

Staff report: Jonathan said that a contractor is repairing a retaining wall on Lakeside Drive near the Pump House. Jonathan has requested two other repairs/improvements: repairing a retaining wall at the upper parking lot, and installing a railing for the steps leading down to the Light Rail crossing. He has no idea when these requests will be approved.

Jonathan will lead a first day hike on Jan. 1, limited to 10 people or less. A second hike for that day is possible. Other January programs are a full-moon hike (last Saturday in January) and a fire-starting program.

Bathrooms are open but the rest of the Nature Center is closed to the public. The park is very busy on warm days.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environmental: There is currently no chair for this committee. Peter Lev reported on recent events. On Dec. 12, 7 volunteers participated in the annual mowing of the Serpentine meadow. Despite morning fog, the mowing went well. Also on Dec. 12, 5 volunteers turned out for Weed Warriors. They helped lay down mulch on the new nature trail behind the Nature Center. On Dec. 14, Peter was invited to an undergraduate thesis presentation at the University of Maryland via Zoom. The topic was "Pollinators in Serpentine Barrens." The student presenter had done his research at Soldiers Delight and Pilot (a Nature

Conservancy property). However, Anahi Espindola, the sponsoring professor, said she hoped to expand her lab's research to include Lake Roland.

Gero Verheyen cautioned anyone visiting the new Nature Trail to stay away from a recently installed owl box in that area.

Historical Preservation: Howdy Knipp and Elliott Plack reported on efforts to locate historical sites in the park. They started from a map of historical sites provided by Jeffrey Budnitz, Elliott downloaded the map to his phone and with the aid of GPS they found 70 to 80% of the sites. They found a graveyard, a number of foundations, and two wells. Near the west end of the Purple Trail they discovered the foundation of a barn. On Dec. 12, after mowing the meadow, Jeffrey Budnitz and Gero Verheyen joined Elliott and Howdy in clearing debris from the barn site.

Elliott introduced himself to the group. He is a geographer with GIS skills, and his work and hobbies overlap. Elliott described his project with Howdy as taking old data and bringing it into GIS, then searching for sites in the field. Elliott also used Lidar, which uses aerial surveys to create a 3-D topographic map.

Paw Point: Beth Hoker and Siobhan Budnitz said we have 313 tags so far. We are ahead of previous years on tag sales.

Trails: Gero reported on recent projects. Photos of mowing in the Serpentine, clearing debris from the barn ruin, and a mowing project at the Ag Center are on the LRNC website. Gero in a wetsuit was also involved in getting stones for the retaining wall (near the pumphouse) out of the lake. He suggested that Board members have a look at the restored sediment box near the upper parking lot. Really beautiful stone work.

Recreation: Howdy asked Jonathan if he needed leaders for hikes.

Membership: 67 members so far.

NEW BUSINESS:

Covid 19 Reimbursement Fund: Baltimore County gave Rec. Councils and Nature Parks a short window to apply for funds. Kurt wrote a request for about \$8700, and was pleased to hear his application described as a model for other applicants. UPDATE on 12-21: LRNC received the full amount requested.

Summer Camp Plans: Jonathan is making contingency plans for holding summer camp within the parameters of current Covid restrictions. He will hold off advertising the camp until early April. One change from last year is a no refund policy—parents will have to take the risk of signing up. If only a few families sign up, camp will be canceled. LRNC is cheap in comparison to other camps or other babysitting options. Prices will rise a little bit this year because of Covid-related expenses such as PPE, but the camp director wants to keep prices down to foster inclusivity.

End of year fundraising: LRNC still owes more than \$79,000 on the Nature Center construction. An email appeal will go out to Board members.

The meeting concluded at 7:45 pm.

Minutes taken by Peter Lev.