

East Haddam Land Trust Annual Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2023, 6:30 pm

Location: East Haddam Historical Society Museum

Call to order:

President Pete Govert called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm and noted the locations of the exits and bathrooms, and reminded all that the meeting documents are at the check-in table.

Approximately 56 members were present.

Gratitude: Pete thanked everyone for coming.

Raffle proceeds support Anita Ballek/East Haddam Land Trust Scholarship. Tickets can be purchased again during the intermission.

Introduction of Directors:

Former directors: Pete introduced them, Sarah Gworek, Martha McLaud-Tonucci, Barbara Pokorny, Steve Gephard, Mary Colpoys

Current directors: Cameron Beard,, Steve Dedman, Jennifer Reiber, Alan Ponanski, Joene Hendry, Nicole Govert, Cynthia Deming, Andrew Compagno.

Conservation Commission members introduced themselves; Pete explained the difference between the LT and CC

Approval of 1/21/2022 annual meeting minutes

PG motioned to approve the 1/21/2022 annual meeting minutes as presented, BP seconded, discussion none, motion approved

Bylaws-proposed change:

Pete noted that the proposed change is to facilitate having annual meetings during warmer months and potentially outdoors to lessen the risk of disease transmission in light of the ongoing Covid risks, and to lessen the need to travel during snowy periods.

PG motioned to change the East Haddam Land Trust, Inc. Bylaws, as adopted January 11, 2018, ARTICLE II, Meetings of Members, Section 1. Annual Meeting. to state, "The Annual Meeting of the Corporation shall be held during the first half of June in each year, at such time and place as shall be determined by the Directors, for the purpose of electing Directors, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Failure to hold any Annual Meeting as here above provided shall in no way affect the validity of any corporate action and a substitute Annual Meeting may be called. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given in the manner prescribed in Section 3 of this Article." CD seconded the motion. Discussion on when this would take effect, conflicts with other events in first half of June, if financial reports would match the meeting date, why set an annual meeting date. Motion approved by majority show of hands.

Reports:

President's report:

Pete noted the following highlights in 2023: continued growth in acreage and membership due to the support from the members, the community, and the directors; looking to increase fundraising activities; staying in touch with people who plan to donate their land.

Treasurer's Report:

Jen Rieber noted the highlights of the Balance Sheet for 2022. Copies of the Balance Sheet were available for the members present (see attached). She noted the successful capital campaign for the Saunders Property; exceeded goal for general donations and for membership donations; overall a successful year. JR said anyone can email her if they have any questions.

Membership Report:

Andrew Compagno noted that membership at about 350, 10-20% higher than last year; finding new members is the difficult part, this year we had about 15 new donors partially due to the suggestion for donations from participants of the 2022 Nutmeg Nor'easter, most members are local individuals and from CT.

Stewardship Report and Powerpoint:

Stewardship Committee Chairman, Cameron Beard showed 2022's stewardship highlights in a powerpoint presentation. He noted the successful Trail Monitor program and expressed our thanks to the Trail Monitors; the Bird Box Brigade; the Invasive Management Subcommittee; new trails at PeGus's Path, the Merrow Preserve, and The Moodus Forest; improvements to the trail blazes and directional posts; the forest management project, currently at Ayers and to be expanded into other preserves - Sheepskin Hollow and Miller Farm - in the future hopefully with grant funding; the interactive trail map; and upcoming projects - the Saunders Preserve which we have funding for and hope to open in 2023 and the Honey Hill Farm Preserve which we signed a purchase and sales agreement for and submitted an OSHA grant for in 2022; a new Capital Campaign is recently started for the Honey Hill Farm. Question on whether EHLT has a program to monitor wildlife on our preserves, which we don't currently have but could consider; and whether we have any plans regarding solar farms.

Looking forward:

Vice-President, Andrew Compagno notified members of the plan to hire a part-time Executive Director to focus on development and fundraising for EHLT. Pete Govert will take on this role. Questions: will PG step down as President, major tasks being fundraising, whether the bylaws mentions staff were all answered by board members.

Nominations and Elections:

The Nominating Committee recommendations are Barbara Pokorny, Ralph Chappell,

Cameron Beard, and Joene Hendry each to 3-year terms, and Kyn Tolson to fill the vacancy that will be left when Pete Govert resigns from the Board to accept the Executive Director position. The new nominees Barbara Pokorny, Kyn Tolsen, and Ralph Chappell introduced themselves,

Nominations from the floor: none

Pg motioned to nominate the slate of board members as presented, Sarah G. seconded, motion carried.

Honorary Membership Presentation:

Pete announced Anita Ballek as EHLT's first Honorary Member, read the letter to her naming her as such; we will plant a sugar maple in her honor and name a trail after her at the new Saunders Preserve.

Questions from the floor: none

Adjournment to Speaker:

PG, hearing no objections, adjourned the meeting at 7:37 pm.

Break: 10-15 minutes; last chance for raffle ticket purchases and picks.

Presentation: "Managing our Woodlands for A Healthy Future," by Andrea Urbano, Private & Municipal Lands Program Supervisor with the Forestry Division of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Raffle winners will be announced after the speaker presentation.

Proposed Change to the Bylaws of East Haddam Land Trust, Inc.,
as Adopted January 11, 2018

On December 20, 2022, the East Haddam Land Trust Board of Directors approved a change to the existing bylaws to allow for holding annual meetings during the first half of June rather than the third week of January. In for this change to occur it must be approved by a majority of the members in good standing present at the January 20, 2023 meeting.

The Board of Directors feels that the warmer weather of June is more conducive to holding a large gathering since it will allow for the possibility of having an outdoor gathering.

Current wording:

ARTICLE II
Meetings of Members

Section 1. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the Corporation shall be held **during the third week of January in each year**, at such time and place as shall be determined by the Directors, for the purpose of electing Directors, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Failure to hold any Annual Meeting as here above provided shall in no way affect the validity of any corporate action and a

substitute Annual Meeting may be called. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given in the manner prescribed in Section 3 of this Article.

Proposed wording:

ARTICLE II
Meetings of Members

Section 1. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the Corporation shall be held during the first half of June in each year, at such time and place as shall be determined by the Directors, for the purpose of electing Directors, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Failure to hold any Annual Meeting as here above provided shall in no way affect the validity of any corporate action and a substitute Annual Meeting may be called. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given in the manner prescribed in Section 3 of this Article.