



*Preserving Land for Community Benefit*

## **2019 ANNUAL MEETING**

*Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

*Mineral Springs Café, Kennett High School, Conway, NH*

### **MINUTES**

#### **Members Present**

Tricia Mattox-Larson  
Deborah Fauver  
Bruce Stelle  
Barbara Stelle  
Jim Hastings  
Martha Chandler  
Barbara Smith  
Burgess Smith  
Larry Garland  
Linda Gray  
David Gotjen  
Rick Jenkinson  
Vickie Jenkinson  
Peter Benson  
Emily Benson  
Alex Drummond  
Greg Cooper  
Amanda Peterson  
Valerie Horn  
Berthold Horn

Alice Proctor  
Linda Comeau  
Doug Burnell  
Kathy Burnell  
Ann Bennett  
Anne Pillion  
Hadley Champlin  
Dan Stepanauskas  
Steph Stepanauskas  
Rebecca McReynolds  
Jim Hastings  
Ailie Byers  
Mark Dindorf  
Lindsay Kafka  
Susan Nichols  
Jeff Lathrop  
Dexter Harding  
Lucy Gatchell  
Tara Taylor  
Paula Brown

Dave Greenslit  
John Border  
Ele Border  
T.O. Currier  
Sam Harding  
Betsey Harding  
Ken Rancourt  
Jane Rancourt  
Linda Dresch  
Hank Dresch  
Judy Fowler  
Betsy Gemmecke  
Maureen Enos  
Staff  
William Abbott  
Erika Rowland  
Trisha Beringer  
Jesse Wright

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#### **Call to Order & Introductions**

Meeting called to order by Board President Doug Burnell at 9:04 am.

For individual member introductions and to record attendance, a sign-up sheet was sent around. After Board and staff introductions, additional committee members were acknowledged.

As part of the introduction to the place, William Abbott noted that the site of the Annual Meeting was adjacent to the historic Minerals Springs House and nearly surrounded by the 460-acre Pine Hill Community Forest, acquired by USVLT in 2018.

Doug reviewed the USVLT by-laws and ground rules, focusing on what defines membership in the organization, the associated voting privileges, and the importance of feedback about any aspect of USVLT's work.

### **Secretary's Report**

Rick Jenkinson provided a brief recap of the 2018 Annual Meeting, and minutes were distributed to members for review. Rick called for comments and questions, followed by a motion and vote to approve the 2018 minutes.

*Jim Hasting moved and Betsey Harding seconded to approve last year's minutes. All voted in favor.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jim Hastings reviewed the financial report in the annual report, noting that it includes two parts and includes the results of operations from the end of December 2017 to December 2018. Key points included that USVLT's unrestricted income was \$40,000 over what was budgeted for 2018. While income increased about 4% for the year, expenses were also up roughly 4%. Jim anticipates that 2019 will be challenging because of the success USVLT had fundraising for land projects in 2018. Project contributions typically compete with operations giving, so in year with large land acquisition projects, unrestricted revenue for operations may decline. In 2018, USVLT raised nearly \$400,000 in revenue for special projects, but Jim noted that this number also includes the value of land donations (for which we didn't have to raise funds). USVLT also built cash reserves over last year through stewardship funding, which now totals \$290,000. Of this total, \$190,000 of this is managed by Maine Community Foundation as a quasi-endowment for stewardship purposes. The larger total also includes a Board-designated legal reserve for defense against potential violations. In summary, the land trust is solid financially, even while accounting for potential challenging circumstances in 2019.

*Rebecca McReynolds moved and Lindsay Kafka seconded to accept the financials as presented in our Annual Report, to be further vetted and/or updated with our upcoming annual financial review. All voted in favor.*

### **President's Comments**

Plans for Pine Hill Community Forest and newly formed Advisory Committee

Doug Burnell summarized the state of the Pine Hill Community Forest (PHCF). In addition to the purchase of the Kennett Company lands, USVLT purchased a "cut out" previously owned by the Conway Village Fire Department and another 8-acres donated by member, Susan Nichols. An advisory committee was established through a Memorandum of Understanding with Town of Conway, emphasizing the importance of community involvement in the preserve's management. To date, there have been three meetings of PHCF advisory committee. Because of the existing and future range of recreational and other opportunities, the advisory committee recommended a comprehensive assessment of the site by a trail consultant to help blend activities, such as forest management and trail use by Kennett High School athletics teams.

### **Executive Director's Comments**

William Abbott provided an account of the other 2018 land projects. He began by noting that at the 2018 Annual Meeting he introduced three new projects, the Lucy Brook Farm and World Fellowship Center conservation easements and Ansara climbers access donation, as well as the continued fundraising for the recently acquired Ware Preserve. USVLT has now completed the fundraising for all four projects: \$436,000 for World Fellowship Center, \$236,000 for Lucy Brook Farm, \$100,000 for the Ware Preserve, and \$46,000 for the Secure the Ledges initiative, which includes the Ansara donation. This is all in addition to the \$200,000 raised for land trust operations, 47% of which comes from membership contributions. He thanked the members for their profound generosity in helping to fund all of these initiatives.

Many of 2018's projects involved partnerships. The Ware Preserve was developed with Granite Backcountry Alliance, providing recreational access to upslope backcountry ski terrain on US Forest Service property. Building on a grant from NH Department of Environmental Services, USVLT Board members continue to engage with municipalities to protect drinking water sources. Hart's Location recently adopted the model drinking water ordinance. Other water protection efforts include the easement donated by Alice Proctor on Great Brook, a tributary of the Wildcat River, 50 years after its federal designation as a Wild and Scenic River. The Ansara donation was made possible by partnering with Friends of the Ledges and The Access Fund. USVLT's food system work involves collaboration with many other organizations, including, Maine Farmland Trust. Finally, USVLT's major events, Fields on the Saco and Art Celebrates Place, involve community and private partners to make them a success.

### 2019 Projects

- Closings for both Lucy Brook Farm and the World Fellowship Center easement project will take place by the end of 2019.
- USVLT will receive a donation of land at base of Redstone Quarry in early June. The property is ringed by conservation land owned by the State of New Hampshire and The Nature Conservancy and provides links to several existing trails and access to historic resources. USVLT may explore an affordable housing component for a portion of the land.
- The Hill Family is donating land in Eaton, downslope of the town's Foss Mountain property.
- USVLT is in the initial stages of a partnership project with the Trust for Public Land to acquire the Dundee Management Company/Beal Family holdings in Jackson and Bartlett. The goal would be to manage the lands as community forest. This large project is still in its early feasibility stage, and if it comes to fruition, would be a large financial undertaking involving more than 1,000 acres.

Finally, with the addition of Peter Howe in early June, USVLT's staff is growing to include a full-time Land Steward.

### **Acknowledgment of Retiring Board Member**

Doug Burnell commented on the valuable contributions Jim Doucette (not present) had made to the organization during his nearly ten years of service. Jim joined the Board on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010, when the annual meeting was held on the side of Foss Mountain, and he has been an integral part of USVLT's functioning ever since. He assumed duties as head of Land Committee in 2015. To his work he brought a sharp eye and quick mind. He contributed to many different aspects of USVLT's work, including recently heading up the personnel committee. He will be missed.

## **Nominating Committee Report**

Anne Pillion began by providing comments on the process of identifying nominees.

Anne introduced Mark Dindorf as the new board Vice President. Anne called for any nominations from the floor and then went on to announce the slate of new board members:

- Greg Cooper-Madison. Greg has been on Land Committee for 3 years and is the treasurer for Pine Hill Community Forest.
- Alex Drummond-Conway, a Mount Washington Valley native and real estate agent.
- Peter Benson-Jackson. Peter has worked for Appalachian Mountain Club, The Nature Conservancy and NH Charitable Foundation. He served on USVLT's initial steering committee and was an early board member.

Anne provided biographic details on each of the new Board candidates (which are provided in the biographies provided as separate handouts). The breadth and depth of knowledge of proposed new members in their respective fields is impressive.

The slate of Directors and Officers:

**-Board-recommended nominations for election to three-year term**

Peter Benson

Alex Drummond

**-Board-recommended nominations for election to two-year term**

Greg Cooper

**-Board-recommended nominations for re-election to three-year terms:**

Doug Burnell

Rick Jenkinson

Thomas Gross

**-Proposed Slate of Officers of the Board:**

Doug Burnell, President

Mark Dindorf, Vice President

Jim Hastings, Treasurer

Rick Jenkinson, Secretary

*Sam Harding moved and Tara Taylor seconded to approve the Proposed Slate of Directors and Officers, as presented. All voted in favor.*

## **Forest Management in the Age of Climate Change**

Dan Stepanauskas, a licensed, professional forester in the Mount Washington Valley for 37 years, shared his knowledge about forest management with a "light touch" and carbon sequestration.

Doug Burnell adjourned the meeting at 10:16 am.