

HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY
Combined meeting of
Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.,
Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council,
and
Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc.
July 22, 2020
Via Telephone
MINUTES

Attendance

Conservancy Members Present

Brown, Kristin, Conservancy Member
Burke, Kevin, Conservancy Chairman
Daniels, Jane, Conservancy Member
Jacks, Betsy, Conservancy Member
Idleman, Sara, Conservancy Member
McLaughlin, Jayne, Conservancy Treasurer
Olson, Sarah, Conservancy Secretary
Tobin, Erin, Conservancy Member
Weiss, Daniela, Conservancy Member
Williams, Jeanne, Conservancy Member
Yarabek, Stefan, Conservancy Member

Conservancy Members Present by Proxy

Lanzetta, Cindy, Conservancy Member
Murray, Dennis, Conservancy Member

Council Members Present

Aldrich, J. Winthrop, Council Member
Castillo, Carla, Council Member
Downey, Margaretta, Dutchess County Council Member
Elliott, Robert, Westchester County Council Member
Ensinger, Lori, Council Member
Head, Betty, Albany County Council Member
McHenry, Barnabas, Council Chairman
McNamara, Mary, Ulster County Council Member
Schiafo, Richard, Greene County Council Member
Smith, Michelle, Putnam County Council Member
von der Heide, Linda, Rensselaer County Council Member
Yaun, Johanna, Orange County Council Member

Delegates Present

Cooper, Linda, Delegate for Commissioner, NYS Department of Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Dunwell, Fran, Joint Co-Delegate for Commissioner, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Ethier, Jaime, Joint Deputy Delegate for Secretary of State

Rooney, Frank, Joint Deputy Delegate for Commissioner of NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets

Wolfanger, Jason, Joint Co-Delegate for Commissioner, NYS Department of Transportation

Wrafter, Eoin, Delegate for Marcus Molinaro

Advisory Members Present

Bicking, Andy, Scenic Hudson

Greenway Staff Present

Arana, Cody, Assistant Event Coordinator

Beers, Andy, Empire State Trails Director

Campochiaro, Beth, Trails and Community Outreach Director

Day, Shannon, Director of Operations

Jeanson, Daniel, Project Coordinator

Keller, Scott, Executive Director

Call to Order

Chairman Kevin Burke called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Executive Director Scott Keller called the roll.

Agenda Review

Chairman Burke called for any comments on the agenda. No comments were made.

Minutes of June 22, 2020 Combined Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc. and Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc.

Chairman Burke then asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the June 22, 2020 Greenway Joint Meeting. On a motion from Chairman McHenry, (Jeanne Williams second) the minutes of the June 22, 2020 Combined Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc. and Greenway Heritage Conservancy HRV, Inc. were unanimously approved.

Minutes of July 15, 2020 Meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee

Chairman Burke called for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2020 meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee. On a motion from Wint Aldrich (Chairman McHenry second) the minutes of the July 15, 2020 meeting of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants Committee were unanimously approved.

Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council

Call to Order

Chairman Barnabas McHenry called the Council meeting to order.

Council Budget Discussion

Mr. Keller reviewed the budget updates for the Communities Council. At this time the Council does not have spending authority to award grants. The current budget allows for payments to other agencies, postage, auto repairs and gas for the state vehicle. The estimated allowable expenses are \$77,000 to \$100,000 for this year, from a budget of \$321,000 and a cash ceiling of \$286,000. Federal action to reimburse states for expenses and revenue losses due to the pandemic could change this. The budget for both organizations will be voted on in the Conservancy portion of the meeting.

Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.

Call to Order

Chairman Burke called the Conservancy meeting to order.

Update on Empire State Trail

Andy Beers, Empire State Trail Director, gave an update on the progress of the Empire State Trail (EST). He noted that trail construction has continued to advance on schedule, and that the Albany Hudson Electric Trail (AHET) is also on pace to be completed by mid-November. Mr. Beers noted that the first eleven miles of the AHET would hopefully open by August.

Mr. Beers also said that work on the 58 construction projects on the rest of the Empire State Trail has continued through the spring with a few small delays, and the trail is still on track for a December 2020 completion. This includes the 22-mile Maybrook Trailway which will be an important connector in Dutchess and Putnam counties. Work also continues on the EST website, which will feature interactive mapping and detailed information on all sections of the trail, including nearby attractions. The website is slated to go live in August.

Chairman Burke inquired about plans to market the trail, and Mr. Beers said that all public announcements would go through the Governor's office and I Love NY. More promotion of travel and tourism would take place in 2021, due to both the pandemic and the fact that the trail is still under construction, and therefore unsafe.

Adoption of Conservancy Audits

Mr. Keller explained that both the not-for-profit and the public benefit corporation of the Conservancy had received an unqualified opinion from the auditors. There are no items listed on the management letters.

Adoption of Annual Budget and Contingency Annual Budget

Mr. Keller reviewed the budget and contingency budget for 2021, included in members' packets. There are no decreases to personal services, and the Conservancy currently has \$50,000 on hand, \$50,000 approved for distribution this quarter and a total

appropriation of \$200,000. There is no spending authority to award trail grants at this time. There are no changes to the Empire State Trail spending authority, which remains at \$27.5 million.

For the Council, there are significant cuts to non-personal services. The National Heritage Area budget remains the same as last year, and the workplan has been submitted. Members of the Finance Committee have reviewed both the full and contingency budgets and have not provided further comments from these versions.

Adoption of PARIS Document

Mr. Keller announced that as a public authority the Greenway Conservancy is required to file documents with the Authorities Budget Office through the Public Authority Reporting Information System or PARIS. These documents (~120 pages) must be approved by the Board. The documents were in the Board packet and were submitted to the State on time. They are substantially the same as last year, with minor revisions reflecting the different levels of expense incurred in the past year.

Chairman Burke called for a vote to adopt the audit results, the budgets, and the PARIS document. On a motion from Stefan Yarabek (Sarah Olson second), the audit results, budgets, and PARIS document were unanimously approved.

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Call to Order

Co-Chairmen McHenry and Burke called the National Heritage Area (NHA) meeting to order.

National Heritage Area Heritage Development Grants

Mr. Keller noted that as the NHA grant program is federally funded, the NHA may award these grants despite the State's budget crisis. He noted that the round of grants permitted sites to use the funds for personal services, to help keep sites operating during the pandemic. Mr. Keller then reviewed the grants that had been reviewed and recommended by the Grants Committee.

The FASNY Museum of Firefighting is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$3,700 for a Virtual Tour of FASNY. The Committee recommends \$3,700.

The Natural Heritage Trust is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$3,500 for a Washington's Headquarters Self-Guided Tour. The Committee recommends \$3,500.

The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery Historic Fund is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$5,200 for a Cemetery Critters and Creatures program. The Committee recommends \$5,000.

The Underground Railroad Education Center is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$3,600 for A New Interpretation of an Old Story, Virtually. The Committee recommends \$3,600.

Walkway Over the Hudson is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$4,997.33 for Virtual Programming for Sustainability. The Committee recommends \$4,990.

Teatown Lake Reservation, Inc. is seeking grant funding in the amount of \$5,000 for Teatown's Environmental Education Distance Learning Program. The Committee recommends \$5,000.

Chairman McHenry called for a vote on the National Heritage Area Heritage Development Grants. On a motion from Wint Aldrich (Linda von der Heide second) the grants were unanimously approved.

National Heritage Area Web Traffic Update

Mr. Keller reviewed the statistics for the NHA website, which has seen an increase in traffic despite many sites being closed due to the pandemic. Some of the notable differences include:

- Total users were up 1.99%, from 20,297 in 2019 to 20,701 in 2020
- Largest single day for users was May 17 this year with 743, and was May 22, 2019 at 393
- +142% in users viewing the website in Chinese (109 in 2020, 45 in 2019)
- +51 in users viewing in Spanish (75 in 2020, 37 in 2019)
- Of the top ten countries by user: Increase in users in China (+52%), Australia (+37%), Netherlands (+34%), Japan (+9%), and the US (+2%, US was about 93% of users in both years). Users were down in Canada (-34%), Germany (-32%), France (-22%), and the UK (-20%).
- Women's History page (launched Jan 28) has seen 573 views
- New Voices of the Hudson page has seen 633 views since launching May 1

New Business/Public Comment

Andy Bicking updated the Board on the Restoring Mother Nature Bond Act, a \$3 billion investment in habitat restoration and flood resilience, open space conservation, and recreation. A Scenic Hudson poll shows widespread public support for it.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mr. Keller noted that included in members' packets was a slide show and update on the progress of the AHET trail. Mr. Keller recognized the staff for their hard work and dedication as they continue to work from home. He also noted that some staff have begun going into the office for short periods of time to perform necessary duties. Empire State Trail staff continue to meet with contractors and others invoiced in EST construction. Mr. Keller must attend these meetings on occasion. PPE has been provided to all staff including masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer.

Future Meetings

The 2020 Joint Greenway Board meetings will be:
October 14, 2020
December 9, 2020

September 11 is the due date for the next round of National Heritage Area grant applications.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m. by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Campochiaro
Meeting Secretary