

**Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council**

**8 Hope Furnace Road, Hope, RI 02831**

**401 615-7039 - [www.pawtuxet.org](http://www.pawtuxet.org)**

**MINUTES**

**Monthly Board Meeting**

**PRA Office, Hope, RI 02831**

**January 10, 2011**

**Board Members Present: Bob Nero, Jack Donovan, Scott Goodinson, Rita Holahan, Jack Lancellotta (left at 9:10), Ginny Leslie, Paul Lockett, Mike Maddalena (left at 8:30), Brian Manning, Carl Mattson, Ed Soltys, Gary Trott**

**Board Members Absent: Ross Adrain**

**Guests: Neutaconkanut Hill Conservancy members: Elly Panichas (President), Richard Autiello, Paul Cormier, Susan Fitzpatrick, Mike Lusi, Tony Panichas, Eric Poulin, Monica Rondeau**

**Call to Order**

**Chairman Bob Nero called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m. A quorum was present. Mr. Nero distributed the agenda; it was approved on a motion by Mr. Mattson which was seconded by Mr. Manning.**

**Presentation by Neutconkanut Hill Conservancy**

**Ms. Panichas gave a brief introduction about the Conservancy and**

introduced Mike Lusi, a landscape architect who gave an extensive video presentation with several maps and aerial photographs showing natural features, forest types (mostly oak and hickory), current land uses (including a 10 acre heavily used City of Providence park on Plainfield Street), ownership, and the trail system. Most of the 88 acre hill is in the Pawtuxet watershed (draining into the nearby Pocasset River) but part is in the Woonasquatucket watershed. He provided historic information (part of the property was a dairy farm and it was the first skiing hill in the state).

The NHC started in 2004 and has had considerable success in cleaning up and improving the property, working with volunteers from groups including Army cadets, Girl Scouts and the Providence College Urban Action program. The NHC's major concern is the undeveloped land owned by Citadel Broadcasting, which has radio towers at the summit of the hill. Some of this property has road frontage and development potential and such development could interrupt natural corridors used by wildlife.

A discussion took place on how the PRA can assist the NHC. The PRA could possibly go with NHC members and Attorney Chris D'Ovidio to meet with representatives of Citadel Broadcasting and potential funding sources; the PRA will not be the lead in these efforts. The NHC believes that one of its major needs is funding to hire an executive director with expertise in fundraising to pursue acquisition of interest in the property.

**Mr. Nero suggested that the PRA establish a subcommittee to work with the NHC. Ms. Leslie and Mr. Manning agreed to serve on the subcommittee with Mr. Nero.**

### **Approval of December, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

**The minutes for the December meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Mattson, seconded by Mr. Donovan.**

### **Executive Session**

**On a motion by Ms. Leslie, seconded by Mr. Mattson, the board voted to go into executive session at 8:31 p.m. The executive session ended at 8:53 p.m. and the regular meeting resumed.**

### **New Accountant Search**

**Mr. Nero reviewed the five names submitted by board members. These candidates will be invited to the PRA office for interviews. Ms. Holahan asked members to submit questions, which she will edit and prepare for the interviews. It was agreed to try to finish the interviews in January (before income tax season begins in earnest).**

### **In honor of Fritz Benz**

**The board members observed several moments of silence in memory of Scituate board member Fritz Benz. Mr. Goodinson suggested the board consider dedicating the new office in his name and have a**

plaque made.

### **FEMA and NRCS Clean-ups**

Ms. Holahan provided a written update on these efforts, including completed sites and others needing work. The FEMA project award of \$33,100 covers the work completed in Cranston and Warwick and additional work in West Warwick. The NRCS contract is still being finalized but will be for almost \$300,000. This will take care of three major sites (Pontiac dam in Warwick and Masie Quinn School and Industrial Lane in West Warwick) and other smaller sites, including Trocchi Park in West Natick and the three dumpsters in the main stem.

### **Conley Property Donation**

This transaction, for a parcel on the main stem upstream from the West Warwick wastewater treatment facility, could not be finalized before the end of 2010. Back taxes have been paid and a DEM file review indicated no record of any violations. On a motion by Ms. Leslie, seconded by Mr. Manning, the board voted unanimously to acquire the property; Mr. Goodinson abstained. Mr. Conley will finalize the paperwork and contact Attorney D'Ovidio to set up a closing.

### **Norwood property donation**

Ms. Holahan reported that the transfer of this 14 acre property abutting the Amtrak line is moving along. The owner will build one

house on about 1,400 square feet. There will be adequate frontage on the road for access to the property. An administrative subdivision has to be approved by the City Council and recorded; the PRA will have to pay the recording fees. Mr. Goodinson will notify the Norwood Neighborhood Association and will plan a presentation for a meeting with that group.

#### **New Business: Use of PRA office by other organizations**

Mr. Nero reported that the Rhode Island Bass Federation is looking for a place to hold its monthly meetings. Members agreed that this would be a good way to affiliate with the group and to get some income.

#### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mr. Mattson, the board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ginny Leslie, Secretary**