

CT Chapter, The American Chestnut Foundation Minutes of the Meeting of Saturday, January 17, 2015

Present: John Anderson, John Baker, Jim Gage, Bill Adamsen, David Bingham, Phil Arnold, Bert Malkus, Jack Ostroff, Garrett Smith, Star Childs, Woods Sinclair, Susan Kelsey, Kendra Gurney, Jane Harris

President John Anderson **called the meeting to order** at 10 a.m. at the Middlefield headquarters of Connecticut Forest and Parks.

John A. asked for a **motion to accept the minutes** of the April 20, 2014 meeting in New Haven. On a motion by John B. and a second by Jim, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Jim presented the **Treasurer's Report**. The chapter had net income of \$2,703.00 and a current asset balance of \$43,773.00. Jane moved to accept the report, and Jack seconded; the motion was unanimously approved.

Before discussing the proposed budget for 2015-2016, John A. asked for decisions regarding the **2015 Annual Meeting**. Star suggested that Dave Wagner, an entomologist at UConn might be available as a speaker; he could speak knowledgeably about obligate predators of the American chestnut, and what their survival strategy (if any) has been. Additional speakers to consider were: Sarah Fitzsimmons, Kim Steiner, Chuck Maynard, Leila Pinchot. The consensus was that the meeting should be held in April, after Easter weekend, with the date to be finalized to accommodate speakers and space availability. Kendra is waiting to hear the date selected for the Vermont Annual Meeting, also in April. Star, Garrett and Jane offered to organize details of the meeting.

John A. asked for a volunteer to chair the **Nominating Committee** in preparation for the Annual Meeting. Jane provided information as to which board members are up for renewal: John A., Jane, Woods, Jack, Star, and Bill. John A. said that his work prevents him from continuing on the board. All others agreed to continue, and Jim, Jack and Jane are all willing to continue in their offices (V-P, Treasurer, and Secretary, respectively.) No one volunteered to be president. John B. agreed to chair the committee. Susan, who is not up for renewal, may be moving, and is not sure how much longer she will be able to serve.

The discussion turned to **new members**. Bill said that the board capacity is 20 members. We currently have 13 members, with one or possibly two resigning. Names of potential members included Christian Allen, Dave Moran, Tom Zetterstrom, Steve Conaway, John Blossom and Matt Freund. Various members agreed to contact those individual and, if they are interested, to request a brief resume.

In later discussion about **seed orchards**, Kendra suggested a lawyer might be useful on the board, and a few names were suggested. Jane will pursue possibilities within the Middlesex County Bar.

Returning to the **proposed budget**, Bill requested a change to \$650 for this year only, to cover fees including: hosting for 2013, 2014, 2015, purchase of a new "theme," three years of domain fees, and DNS and host migration. With the new site, future annual fees should drop to below \$100.

Discussion ensued re fencing costs for Guilford and, possibly, Woods' fence which may need a regulator and a battery. An allocation of \$5,000 was agreed upon, as well as a request for the Manton Grant in the amount of \$5,000.

David suggested that reserving some funds for exclusion fencing might help induce land owners such as land trusts to enter into an agreement for providing access to a seed orchard.

John A. asked for a motion to **accept the revised budget** (increased by \$500 to cover the web hosting costs) and, on a motion by David and a second by Bill, the budget was unanimously approved.

Kendra provided an update on **seed orchards**, which are underway in Maine and Massachusetts. She, Susan and Woods visited Rock Cobble Farm in S. Kent, where the farm manager is very interested in working with us. The land abuts a land trust. A deeded easement will be needed.

David suggested more focus on introducing the topic of seed orchards to land trust principals. He and Jim will attend the annual symposium of the CT Land Conservation Council, which will convene in Middletown on March 21. Since Kendra will not be available for that date, Jim and David will see if they can arrange for a workshop on seed orchards, and Kendra will try to entice Brian Clark from the Massachusetts chapter to cover it.

John A. asked for any **new business**, and Bill displayed a laminated tree tag that he created for chestnut trees, either growing on the roadside or at one of our orchards. The tag contains a QR code, so anyone who has a QR scanner on a smart phone can link to the website of the closest orchard. Bill offered to provide tags for each of the orchards.

The **meeting was adjourned** at 12:30 on a motion by John B. and Woods.

Jane Harris
Recording Secretary