



The American Chestnut Foundation Vermont/New Hampshire Chapter
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Conference call, Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Board members present: Yurij Bihun (President), Daane Crook (Treasurer), William Coder (Acting Secretary), Terry Gulick, Gary Hawley, Curtis Laffin, Douglas McLane, James Talbot,

Member absent: Gary Robertson (Vice President), James (JP) Powers, William Widmer

TACF Staff present: Kendra Collins, Regional Science Coordinator

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2019 BOD Conference Call

Upon a motion made by Terry and seconded by Curt, minutes as submitted were unanimously approved.

2. Review and Approval of Treasurer's Report of February 7, 2020

Daane's report covering from November 1, 2019 to February 7, 2020 showed total income from membership and donations of \$920, and total expenses of \$3,568.12, primarily to pay for expenses for the Deering Orchard. At the end of the period accounts totaled \$21,153.77

Upon a motion made by Terry and seconded by Bill C, the treasurer's report documents were unanimously approved as submitted.

3. Review and Approval of Proposed 2020 Budget

Discussion of the budget primarily dealt with potential orchard expenses and how those are handled within the operating budget versus past coverage under Manton grants.

Upon a motion made by Terry and seconded by Gary H, the proposed 2020 budget as submitted was unanimously approved.

Relative to the Manton Grant submission for 2020, Gary H proposed that Chapter request \$4000, an amount that should reduce the expected or potential orchard expenses in the operating budget such that total expenses approximately balance with expected income.

4. Membership Report

Curt provided a report on outreach and educational activities. He noted that the most recent membership report shows a relatively stable number that is not meeting strategic goals for increasing our support base. He intends to reach out to survey the members who have lapsed over the last three or four months and try to find out why they are not renewing.

5. BOD Development and Succession

The nomination process for the annual meeting and the provisions of Article 3 of the Bylaws were briefly reviewed.

a. Executive Committee Nominations

The Nominating will formalize the officer slate for presentation at the Annual Meeting, which is expected to consist of Doug McLane, President; Curt Laffin, Vice President; Daane Crook, Treasurer; and Bill Coder, Secretary.

b. New BOD Nominations

A vacancy is anticipated in the BOD as of the Annual Meeting. Qualifications and levels of interest for several female candidates were summarized by Yuri on behalf of the Nominating Committee.

Supporting documents from Dr. Ann Hazelrigg relating to her candidacy were circulated just prior to the meeting and were well received by the attendees. Although the bylaws leave it to the Nominating Committee, Doug moved to approve Dr. Hazelrigg's candidacy; it was seconded by Gary H and passed unanimously.

Kimberly Wallen was also under consideration but there was concern about her level of availability due to a job-related move. Doug moved that Ms. Wallen not be considered further at this time; Curt seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that there are several other potential board members in the pipeline.

Gary Hawley's suggestion of having ungraduated student representation was also viewed favorably but bylaws may exclude temporary BOD participants from voting.

Jim Talbot also has been in discussion with a UVM professor about a program of placing a Board Fellow from a slate of Ph.D. Candidates. He will provide further information after a near term meeting.

6. Planning 2020 Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting

May 9 was selected as the target date for the Annual Meeting and Plymouth NH Library as the venue. Tom Klak, a professor at University of New England previously spoke at a MA/RI Chapter Meeting has been approached to be our speaker. After lunch there is an opportunity for a short field trip next door to the GCO. BOD meeting will follow the full membership meeting.

The NH delegation will be responsible for the majority of further preparations.

7. Update on Orchard Development Plan and Management

Prior to the meeting Kendra provided the orchard development plan which resulted from a meeting earlier in the week. This plan covers the 2020 season and will be updated yearly.

8. Spring Newsletter Planning

Yurij will lead putting together the newsletter which will need to be sent out at least a month prior to the May 9 Annual Meeting. Bill and Curt offered to generate an article for the newsletter regarding locations of existing educational plantings.

9. Educational Plantings and Outreach

A Boy Scout camp in Eden, VT had been offered as an educational planting site, but there was concern about its very northerly location being a bit challenging for chestnut trees. Jim noted that the Vermont Farm Show resulted in some people signing up as being interested in hosting educational plantings or research plantings.

Curt stated that he is evolving his presentation and outreach materials to encompass more information about the broader 3BUR directions and as applied in the Chapter's orchard plan. He also suggested that the Strategic Plan needs update and offered to take a cut at a draft. (Secretary's note: possible topic for discussion at the Spring BOD meeting.)

10. 2020 Display Opportunities

Terry received a call from Herrick's Cove, Bellows Falls, VT regarding exhibiting there on May 3. Discussion again occurred about what to do with the large VT display board but no decision resulted.

11. Kiosks and Interpretive Signs

Yurij noted that he needs to arrange for interpretive signage for Essex Seed Orchard and Jericho Research Forest.

12. Salvage Program Update

There is some uncertainty about salvage from a Caanan tree that Gary Robertson may be able to answer. Concern arose again about the potential sale of the Knight property both from the orchard and lumber storage perspectives. Yurij took the action item to try to reach Randy to discuss.

13. New Business

none

14. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Terry, seconded by Gary H. There being no objections voiced the business meeting was concluded at about 7:50 PM.

Follow-up / Action Items

1. NH contingent to finalize Annual Meeting arrangements.
2. Curt to draft a proposal for updating Strategic Plan.
3. Follow-up for those interested in educational / research plantings from VT Farm Show; unclear who owns this.
4. Yurij to reach out to Randy Knight regarding status of their farm sale and how that affects chapter lumber and orchard.