



The American Chestnut Foundation Vermont/New Hampshire Chapter  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Zoom Conference call, Monday, March 1, 2021, 7:00 PM

Directors present:

Yurij Bihun, Bill Coder, Daane Crook, Dr. Gillian Galford, Gary Hawley, Dr. Ann Hazelrigg, Curt Laffin, Doug McLane, James (JP) Powers, Dr. Jim Talbot

Director absent: Terry Gulick

Other BOD members present: Kendra Collins- NE Regional Science Coordinator, Jess Wikle;

Other Chapter members present: Will Abbott, Chris Leask, Tom Estill, Lewis LaClair

Business began at approximately 7:08 with brief introductions from the member guests.

**1. Approval of minutes of October 27, 2020 meeting**

Upon a motion made by Curt and seconded by Gary, minutes were unanimously approved.

**2. Financial review and approval of Treasurer's Reports**

Daane summarized his February 23, 2021 reports, acknowledging a \$5000 grant from Grey Rocks Foundation and the proceeds from a successful auction of a rocking chair.

Totals reported are as follows:

Income:	\$8,322.00
Expenses:	\$4,601.01
Bank accounts:	\$29,048.02

Upon a motion made by Ann and seconded by Curt, Treasurer's Reports were unanimously approved.

Daane noted that the Chapter is operating without a 2021 budget, but many past expense categories from the 2020 budget were and are still negated by pandemic conditions. Income, grants, and funds in the bank are more than sufficient to cover anticipated seasonal spending.

The Chapter's 2020 Manton Grant spending did not deplete the \$4000 allocation requested. For 2021 the Chapter requested \$2000, with signage expenses being the main category identified, to be spent between April 1 and the end of March.

### **3. Strategic Planning and Committee Reporting Process**

Curt shared that he will soon be emailing the Board to solicit inputs into updating the Chapter's strategic plan. He read from the 2017 plan:

Goal of the VT/ NH Chapter Self-sustaining stands of blight-resistant American chestnut trees growing in Vermont and New Hampshire woodlands  
It was noted that the term "blight tolerant" is more in keeping with the 3-BUR science program vs. "blight-resistant" used in the goal statement above.

Curt also asked for feedback on whether the combined committee reporting begun in January would be useful on the quarterly schedule that he proposed in October. Discussion converged toward reporting twice a year, once around the Annual Meeting as a basis for communicating with Membership. Jim noted that active committees should be notifying the Board whenever they have an actionable issue.

### **4. Planning for Annual Meeting / Election**

Kendra shared that several chapters have had successful virtual Annual Meetings complete with speakers. A lot of logistical aspects of holding the Annual Meeting in person are simplified: no venue to arrange, no lunch preparations, etc. Doug noted that Dr. Tom Klak who was to have spoken at the 2020 Annual Meeting would likely be available for April or May of 2021. Kendra noted that remote speakers such as Andy Newhouse of SUNY ESF are easier to arrange without travel.

Doug made a call for volunteers to help with organizing the Annual Meeting to please contact him.

Several ideas were posed for recognizing Terry Gulick's board service as a founding board member who will not be standing for re-election. Honorary membership is provided for in the bylaws, authorized by a vote of the membership.

(Follow up Note: As there was no decision made, the recognition ideas should be taken up in the planning for the Annual Meeting. Honorary membership would need to be included in the ballot associated with the Annual Meeting. Several gift ideas were also suggested by Yuriy and Curt. )

The Nominations Committee plays the main role in preparation for elections, recommending a slate of new Board members and officers as needed to replace those whose terms of service will be expiring. All current officers were elected for one year and will be up for renewal. Succession of officers has not been a systematic process and relies on potential officers stepping forward. Bill noted he would happily step down as Secretary should there be another board member interested in serving in that office; he is otherwise willing to renew as Secretary.

## **5. Bylaws Update Proposal**

Very few comments were received in response to the proposal emailed on 2/16/2021 with the specific query for review of Committee charter statements. Emailed comments received from current officers were split on whether officer terms should be one year or two. Bill asked meeting attendees for opinions if two years would stifle potential officers from stepping forward and the primary feedback was that two year terms should not be an obstacle.

No vote was taken nor was dissent voiced regarding submitting the proposal to Membership for their approval.

## **6. American Chestnut Location Committee**

A new chair is needed for this committee while in the interim Doug is acting in that role. Kendra noted that an important role of the committee is in following up on flowering trees to coordinate their pollination.

## **7. Biotechnology Committee**

The Board expressed support for sending American tree nuts to Chapter members with no charge. Gillian suggested that the cost of postage be scoped out ahead of time in order to limit the overall cost of the project. Doug has about 350 seeds available and is proposing to mail five per package. An offer to all on the Chapter mail list was to be sent out shortly. Gary noted the importance of including a disclaimer on their survival prospects. Some income may result from non-members deciding to join

Several volunteers are sprouting nuts for distribution of seedlings early in the planting season. Discussion of recouping materials cost for potting seedlings was deferred.

## **8. Safari Club International Donations**

The Governance Committee found an inherent mismatch of the endangered species goals between TACF and Safari Club International. The Committee is not however suggesting a need to routinely investigate other large donors. Curt moved to accept the Governance Committee's recommendation to decline anticipated future donations from Safari Club International. Jim seconded, and the motion was passed.

Governance Committee Follow up: Kendra noted that contacts Paul or Samantha at the National office need to be advised of our Chapter's position.

## **9. Newsletter**

Having volunteered to coordinate the writing and editing of an annual newsletter, Yuriy is soliciting story ideas or contributions. He is also seeking assistance from someone experienced with publications software.

## **10. Salvage**

Gary announced that an individual at a mill in Bristol VT had offered to make a full sized table from a salvage log in barter for some additional lumber. The Salvage Committee is to discuss this.

## **11. Science Plan Update**

Kendra announced that she will be sending out an updated Chapter Science Plan before she is to go on family leave.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM