

MOHAWK TRAIL WOODLANDS PARTNERSHIP

Forest-Based Economic Development and Conservation

Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership

Executive Committee Minutes

December 17, 2020,

11:30 am

Virtual Meeting as allowed by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provision of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

Attendance

MTWP Executive Committee Members

H. Art, Chair, B. O'Connor, W. Sanford

MTWP Staff Support

T. Matuszko, P. Sloan, M. Buccowich, L. Hayden

MTWP Board Members

K. Ross, D. McNally

Others

D. Crane. G. Ayers, S. Dravis, J. Sinclair

Minutes:

A motion was made by B. O'Connor, seconded by H. Art to approve the minutes from August 20, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. This motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittee membership

After discussion, it was generally agreed that Hank's memo should go out to Board members to ask them to self-nominate themselves for various committees by Jan. 7 – the form also asks for members to consider volunteering to be chair or to take notes. Standing sub-committees include: Finance & Budgeting; Forest Land Conservation; Natural Resource-based Economic Development; Education, Outreach & Research; Municipal Financial Sustainability.

Discussion was paused as there was a request from a member of the public that this meeting be recorded. G. Ayers recorded the meeting.

When it resumed, there was a discussion about NEFF participation at subcommittee meetings, and if so, how should minutes be handled. On the positive side, NEFF might be able to better learn about the region, but there was concern that meeting coordination takes much time and energy – with the need to simultaneously move forward on numerous projects. It was generally agreed NEFF will participate in subcommittee meetings as much as possible – especially in the first six months to a year – and to be the “keeper” of the minutes, but a subcommittee member would be a note taker to assist. Eventually NEFF plans to hire a local, part-time person to help with some of the administrative functions as part of the Agent budget. The aforementioned committee self-nomination form will include an additional column asking for willingness to be note taker. The goal is to get the composition of the subcommittee membership set in January in advance of the next Board meeting.

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Update on NEFF negotiations

Contract negotiations are ongoing. NEFF agreed to re-do the budget to reflect a 4-year contract. NEFF was also revising the scope of work as soon as possible. The goal was to finalize the contract, which would start in January 2021, by January 15, 2021.

There was discussion about Board insurance. L. Hayden agreed to try to get a local quote for Board insurance, noting that a request for a quote from NEFF's agent involved filling out a detailed form about the MTWP, for which Board assistance may be required to answer all the questions. W. Sanford requested that whenever possible local businesses should be used, in this instance, to provide the insurance.

Update on transition from regional planning agencies to NEFF

NEFF and planning commission staff have a meeting on December 22, 2020 to start the transition from planning commissions to NEFF.

Next meeting

The next Executive Committee meeting will be Tuesday January 26, 2021 at 11:00.

The next Partnership Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday February 23, 2021 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

Other items

Thanks was given to P. Sloan and T. Matuszko for their joint efforts serving as Administrative Agent, and Ex. Com. members reflected on how the Partnership has evolved.