Annual Meeting

January 11, 2020

Minutes

Present: 43 members

President Donald Ross opened the meeting at 10:30 am.

Minutes from January 11, 2019 Annual Meeting were unanimously approved.

Ross welcomed all in attendance.

Governance: Tom Key described the process for electing trustees and explained the difference between active and emeritus status. He announced that he, Dave Heck, Kathy Mera, Bill Morrill, Dick Paddock, and Howard Sobel have reached the end of their terms and would be going off the board. Heck, Key, Mera, Morrill, and Paddock have accepted emeritus status. Four trustees, Peter Kent, Sarah Morrison, Rich Reifsnyder, and Donald Ross are eligible to renew for another three-year term and all have chosen to stand for election. Two Trustees Emeritus, Chris Brennan and George Massey are eligible to return to active status. Four new candidates, Laura Carlson, Matthew Pearson, Abeth Slotnick, and Cynthia Walsh were introduced. Key presented the following slate for member consideration.

For three-year terms:

Chris Brennan
Laura Carlson
Peter Kent
George Massey
Sarah Morrison

Matthew Pearson
Rich Reifsnyder
Donald Ross
Abeth Slotnick
Cynthia Walsh

A motion to approve the slate of trustee candidates was approved unanimously.

President: Donald Ross noted SA efforts to help raise funds to keep the Lakeville Journal in business. He explained the existence and history of an SA managed Hoskins Fund for the Lakeville Journal that dates back to 1993. It was from this fund that SA donated $10,000. As a result of efforts by SA and others, the Journal has exceeded its 2019 fund raising goals. Ross then went on to thank Sarah Morrison for her extraordinary work on creating and managing the Wonders of Winter art exhibition. He said that the show has received international attention.
**Treasurer:** Diane Fitzmyer Murphy reported that the SA finished 2019 under budget by 9%. She noted that contributions increased significantly and these covered 47% of 2019 expenditures.

**Historical Society:** Lou Bucceri reviewed the highlights of HS activities through the year. For the past six years, the HS has sponsored and supported Salisbury Central School students participating in the National History Day academic competition. Last year 15 students created 8 projects for the regional contest in Torrington, two of the projects qualified for the state round of judging. After the competitions, student work was on display in the Academy Building. Members of the HS created and displayed exhibits on SWSA, the 90th anniversary of Music Mountain, and a postcard history of Salisbury. There was also continued collaboration with the Scoville Library on lectures. Jean McMillen has worked tirelessly to document town history through the Oral History Project. Her efforts have increased the number of transcribed interviews to 391. She has also uploaded almost all of those interview transcripts to the SA website. The HS employed two young people from the Salisbury Summer Youth Jobs Program. They contributed to work on creating the Postcard exhibit, reviewed and organized historic documents and records, helped photograph and map grave locations in the Town Hall cemetery, and participated in field trips to significant historic locations in town. Teachers at Salisbury Central continue to invite Lou Bucceri to present Salisbury history to local students. To improve the capabilities of the photo archive, a new scanner and computer were purchased and installed. During 2019 more than 1,000 people attended programs or exhibits organized by members of the HS.

**Community Events:** Kathy Mera thanked Kay Key for her work with the tree subcommittee. Through the Powell Fund, 16 trees were planted in an effort to help rebuild the historic canopy along the town’s main streets. The Era of Elegance presentations, the Independence Day picnic, and the holiday concert were all well attended. Mera commented that the concert introduced some new people to the SA who marveled at the breadth of SA activities. Last April, the CE conducted a Volunteer Fair for local organizations to network with each other and connect with the public. Finally, she mentioned the Wonders of Winter exhibit and the interest it has generated locally.

**Land Trust:** John Landon remarked that the Land Trust had a productive year. More than 75 acres along the Appalachian Trail was bought from the Pope family, while 244 acres will be purchased from Alice Yoakum to protect an environmentally important area of Mount Riga. This was made possible through the efforts of Shelley Harms, who was able to obtain both private and state grants to cover the purchase prices. Landon thanked Harms for her work. Conservation easements were obtained on two properties. One is for an additional parcel of Findlay land on Prospect Mountain; the other is a Moses Taylor & Co. LLC piece on Mount Riga that is the first in Connecticut to be designated “Forever Wild.” In a Forever Wild easement, the landowner generally gives up the rights to build structures and roads, subdivide, conduct commercial or industrial activities, farm, and cut timber. As required by accreditation guidelines, boundary signs for SA owned lands are being put in place. Young people from the AmeriCorps program and students from Indian Mountain School worked to maintain some of SA’s public trails. The LT continued to sponsor educational programs
at Salisbury Central through Sharon Audubon. Landon reported that LT organized presentations on Mountain Lions and Bears that were attended by hundreds of people. Future plans include creating public access to the newly acquired Pope and Yoakum lands, creating and mounting an exhibit on birds, and a presentation on wolves, coyotes, and foxes on February 14.

**Wonders of Winter:** Sarah Morrison explained that the purpose of the exhibition was partly to engage different parts of the community. As an example, she noted the work of Housatonic Valley Regional High School art teacher, Warren Prindle, whose students were asked to create magazine cover art in the tradition of the New Yorker magazine. Winter art from the covers of the New Yorker and Yankee magazines is included in the exhibition at The White Hart Inn.

President Ross then opened the meeting to public questions or comments. Easement work was explained. Jeanette Weber announced that a Public Relations subcommittee is being formed to better manage organizational communication with the public. Some folks decried the amount of trash along roadways. Tom Key noted that there was less trash at Dark Hollow in 2019. An individual inquired about ways to deal with invasive plants along the road. George Massey spoke about recent efforts to train the town crewmembers to identify and remove these. A member of a group whose purpose is to eradicate black swallowwort thanked the Land Trust for its support of the group’s work.

The meeting adjourned at 11:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louis J. Bucceri