



MINUTES

**Grant Programs Committee – a Committee of the
Board of Trustees
5/25/2021
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

ATTENDEES:

Trustees:

Beth Obenshain, Chair
Viola Baskerville
Brent Thompson

Staff:

Bobbie Cabibbo, Executive Assistant
Leslie Grayson, Deputy Director
Martha Little, Deputy Director
Dave Morton, IT Manager
Emily White, Grant Program Manager

Other Attendees:

Liz Belcher
Lindsay Webb

Beth Obenshain, Chair opened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. and read the following meeting procedure order:

“As a result of the state of emergency declared in the Commonwealth by order of the Governor on March 12, 2020: Pursuant to Executive Amendment 28 to HB29 (2020), the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) will meet by electronic communication means, without more than one Board member physically assembled at one location, to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of VOF and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities, as outlined in the meeting agenda. Due to the Governor’s declared state of emergency, the meeting will be held electronically because the nature of the emergency makes it impracticable and unsafe to assemble in a single location. In addition, the purpose of the meeting is to discuss or transact business statutorily required to continue the operations of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. “

Bobbie Cabibbo conducted Roll Call Vote for attendance of Board members attending. Beth Obenshain, Viola Baskerville and Brent Thompson were in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments offered.

CHAIR’S REPORT

Chair waived her report.

GRANT PROGRAMS

Emily White narrated a presentation, which is on file with the permanent record of this meeting. She outlined the action items for the meeting and presented the Preservation Trust Fund Projects for review. She highlighted one example, the *Blue Ridge Discovery Center Restoration of Historic Konnarock Training School*. Discussion concerning details of projects were had and more information will be shared with trustees as requested e.g. value of Mitchell YOUiversity property. Viola asked that budgets be included in the application process even if not fully developed by the applicant. Viola inquired about the viability aspect of several of the more ambitious projects – i.e. how the VOF grant funds would be used in the event that other funding sources identified in budgets are not attained.

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Leslie discussed the principle that VOF is providing a grant to support the project and that the key element deliverable is the permanent protection of the land or site and the commitment that it will be open to the public in perpetuity. The PTF public access program creates permanent sites that are committed to public open space use.

Viola pointed out that many of applicants are new to grant processes and that VOF can be a leader in encouragement, teaching and meanwhile setting a new level of partnership. She wants VOF to help new entities to grow and to develop strong programs that have fully developed and realistic goals.

PRESERVATION TRUST FUND (PTF) PUBLIC ACCESS PROJECTS

Applicant	Project Title	Locality	Funding Recommended
Amherst County	Riveredge Trail Extension and Lee Park Project	Amherst	\$59,665
Belmead on the James, Inc.	Drexel-Morrell Center	Powhatan	\$150,000
Blue Ridge Discovery Center	Blue Ridge Discovery Center Restoration of Historic Konnarock Training School	Smyth	\$150,000
Capital Region Land Conservancy	River City Middle School Greenway	Richmond City	\$150,000
Mitchell YOUiversity	Shipman School	Nelson	\$100,000
Roanoke County	Roanoke River Greenway and Blueway at Niagara Dam, Joining Explore Park	Roanoke	\$100,000
Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc.	Shadwell Trail; Old Mills Trail extension; Three Notch'ed Trail	Albemarle	\$30,000
Tidewater Trails Alliance	The Birthplace of America Trail— Surry County Link	Surry	\$86,635
Town of Blacksburg	Meadowbrook Greenway	Montgomery	\$85,000

GET OUTDOORS (GO) FUND

Emily reviewed the staff recommended projects submitted for the GOFund. The presentation highlighted several GOFund applicants whose goal is getting children outside. The trustees discussed merits of projects and requested more information on several projects.

Beth asked for a review of the process staff uses to discern which projects are put forth for approval.

Viola disclosed that although she was not part of the application process, she is a member of the Agee Miller Mayo Dungy Pine Grove Project.

GOFUND STAFF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

Applicant	Project Title	Locality	Funding Recommended
Agee Miller Mayo Dungy Pine Grove Project	Pine Grove Park, Phase One	Cumberland	\$24,465
Brunswick County Industrial Development Authority	Trail Gateway Project	Brunswick	\$25,000
Charles City County	Harrison Park Walking Trail	Charles City	\$25,000
College Park Elementary School	Outdoor Classroom for Early Learners	Virginia Beach	\$10,020

GO FUND STAFF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS (continued)

Applicant	Project Title	Locality	Funding Recommended
Community Unity in Action / Kinfolk Community	Growing Food Justice in Richmond East End	Richmond City	\$18,648
Dickenson County Board of Supervisors	Bear Pen Recreation Park Project	Dickenson	\$10,450
Essex County	Rotary Poorhouse Park Trails	Essex	\$25,000
Fairfax NAACP	Connecting the Community with Nature	Fairfax	\$25,000
Happily Natural Day	Community Gathering Space at Sankofa Community Orchard	Richmond City	\$25,000
Holston High School	Holston High School Bouldering Project	Washington	\$4,800
Mendota Trail Conservancy	Bristol Trailhead Development	Bristol	\$24,000
Richmond Cycling Corps	MTB Program	Henrico	\$5,000
Rivanna Trails Foundation	Fifeville Trail Restoration Project	Charlottesville	\$24,650
Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition	Sunset Park Community-Centric Trails Planning and Stewardship	Waynesboro	\$12,000
Town of Alberta	Tobacco Heritage Trail Danielstown Extension	Brunswick	\$18,500
Town of South Boston	South Boston Sinai Park Project	Halifax	\$25,000
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation	Multi-Lingual Website and Trail Materials	Henrico	\$4,500
City of Radford	James Oakley Fields Playground Improvements	Radford	\$24,498.41
Franklin County Parks and Recreation	Capacity Building by Bicycle	Franklin	\$5,000
Friends of Southwest Virginia	Tazewell Area Trails East River Mountain/Big Dome Rock	Tazewell	\$15,000

The Chair called for a motion on the action items on the AGENDA.

Motion made by Viola Baskerville to recommend approval to the full Board of Trustees the award of \$24, 364 from the PTF to the proposed Mackey easement which was approved in April 2021; motion seconded by Brent and passed unanimously.

Motion made by Beth to recommend to the full Board of Trustees the expansion of the use of Easement Assistance funds to include the ability to make match awards for farmland preservation projects when VOF is the applicant sponsor. Increase the amount reserved from PTF for Easement Assistance grants to \$350,000 for FY 22; motion seconded by Viola and passed unanimously.

Motion made by Brent to recommend approval to the full Board of Trustees the recommended Preservation Trust Fund Public Access Projects and staff suggested funding levels as listed in the chart above for a total allocation of \$911,300; motion seconded by Viola and passed unanimously.

Draft

Motion made by Beth to recommend approval to the full Board of Trustees the recommended GOFund projects and funding levels listed on the above chart for a total allocation of 51,531.41 and to plan in FY22 two grant rounds at a total funding level of \$800,000 (\$400,00 for each round); motion seconded by Viola and passed unanimously

Motion made by Viola to recommend approval to the full Board of Trustees to grant staff administrative authority to approve award increases (for both GOFund and Preservation Trust Fund Public Access) up to 10% for grant projects that meet the following criteria:

- The increase request has been reviewed by Deputy Directors and been found justified, supported with appropriate documentation, and
- The Administrative Director has reviewed availability of funds, current budget status, and has approved the increase.

Motion seconded by Brent and passed unanimously.

The Chair thanked the staff again for their hard work and excellent response rate which is a direct result of “getting the word out”.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M.