

## **Squam Lakes Natural Science Center**

### **2021 Annual Meeting Minutes**

**August 21, 2021, 8:30-9:15**

#### **Via Zoom**

A total a forty-four “unique users” logged in remotely and fifty-five individuals participated.

Justin Van Etten called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. He started out with a remembrance of Trustee Tom Cowie who passed away in early 2021. At the time, he was Board Secretary and Chair of the Human Resources Committee. Justin acknowledged Tom’s outstanding contribution to the Board, particularly highlighting his help during the sale of the Holderness Inn and the acquisition of the Lake Cruise Headquarters. As well as his excellent minute taking . . . which led into the next item: the approval of the 2020 Annual Meeting minutes so ably taken by Tom.

Justin asked for a motion to approve last year’s minutes. The motion was moved and seconded and all approved as written.

Justin then paid tribute to the outstanding contributions of Tony Wagner, who after nine years is cycling off the Board at this meeting. During that time, Tony chaired the Education Committee and has been a champion of education and particularly the Blue Heron School. The assembled group thanked Tony for his service.

Justin then handed over to Sarah Brown, chair of the Governance Committee, for election of Trustee and Officers.

Sarah asked for a motion to elect three current Board members to new three-year terms: Justin Van Etten to his third 3-year term; Martha Grant to her second three-year term; and Susan Lynch to her second 3-year term. The motion was moved and seconded; all voted in favor.

Sarah asked for a motion to elect four new Trustees to three-year terms: Cathy Denious, Diane Garfield, Barbara (Nan) Grossman, and David Murphy. She highlighted their outstanding life experiences and skills and encouraged all to read their bios online. The motion was moved and seconded; all voted in favor of their election.

Sarah then asked for a motion to elect Board Officers to one-year terms: Justin Van Etten (Chair), Sarah Brown (Vice Chair), Anne Lovett (Treasurer), and Susan Lynch (Secretary). The motion was moved, seconded, and all voted in favor.

Justin then handed over to Executive Director Iain MacLeod for staff recognitions, the Horizon Award, and 2020 Year in review.

Iain acknowledged the staff milestones. Aubrey Voelker, Animal Care Training Coordinator for five years of service; Amanda Gillen, Marketing Manager for ten years; Jeremy Phillips, Naturalist for ten years; Dennis Capodestria, Exhibits Assistant for fifteen years (in current role); and Margaret Gillespie, Naturalist for thirty-five years. Iain also paid tribute to the entire staff for their hard work and dedication through the last eighteen months.

Justin noted that this year is also a milestone for Iain who has been our Executive Director for fifteen years.

Iain then presented the Horizon Award:

The Board of Trustees of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center established the Horizon Award in 1995 as a means to honor exceptional and extended service to the center. The following volunteers, staff, and Trustees have been recognized over the years for their leadership, vision, passion and commitment to our organization and its mission: Elizabeth Ford Wood, David Cote, Dennis Capodestria, Dave Erler, Steve Woodsum, Michael O'Leary, John McRae, Nancy Beck, Joan and Paul Mayerson, Carol Thompson, Alex Ray, Brenda Erler, Natalie Parsons, George Carr, Janet Robertson, Tashia Morgridge, Laurie Beeson, Tim Curry, Bruce Whitmore, Laura Mammarelli, and Lea Stewart.

This year Iain was delighted to present the Horizon Award to Margaret Gillespie

Iain quoted from the award certificate: Margaret Gillespie's connection to the Science Center began in 1986 when she joined the staff as a Naturalist. At the same time, she worked as the Coordinator for New Hampshire Project Learning Tree for the next eleven years.

Throughout her thirty-five years with the Science Center, she has inspired countless thousands of students and families while sharing her passion for the natural world through engaging and innovative educational experiences.

Margaret has also reached an even larger audience through her writings. She has written the natural history column for the Tracks and Trails newsletter for more than thirty years.

With much appreciation

August 21, 2021

On behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Iain then did a year in review, looking back at 2020. Of course, COVID had a significant impact on our attendance and programs. Many functions went virtual including daily Blue Heron lessons which were conducted by Zoom.

Brian Eaton joined Iain in walking through the financial picture and highlighting ~~to~~ the following:

- Trail attendance declined by over 50% vs. a record 2019. 2020 results were driven by a delayed opening and visitor limits as part of Covid precautions, while 2019 benefitted from the dinosaur exhibit.
- Program revenue was down 90%.
- Overall earned revenue was \$946,000 under budget.
- But contributions were \$107,000 over budget . . . THANK YOU!
- We applied for and received over \$720,000 in federal CARES ACT dollars (including PPP). Significantly, the PPP loan has been converted to a grant. Special thanks to Iain and to Brian Eaton for acting proactively, and documenting the expenditure to receive the grant status.

- All that combined with tightening our belts and reducing expenses by \$250,000 (even with additional expenses of operating in the Covid environment, including twenty-three gallons of hand sanitizer!) meant that we ended the year in the black.
- No staff laid off or furloughed. We kept our whole team together . . . and healthy!

2021 is certainly a rebound year with significant return to “normal” in trail attendance (with record breaking June attendance and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest trail count for month of July). Iain highlighted the new Raptor Exhibit as being a major success and showed some slides of the new exhibit elements. The zip-line is a fun and interactive way to educate visitors about migration, and the owl discs, which amplify sound, mimicking owls’ round faces and feathering, are a fun way to discuss animal adaptations. Timed ticketing is still in effect, with the benefit of spreading out 900 or more visitors over the course of the day, leading to a better visitor and staff experience.

Justin concluded the meeting by paying tribute to the staff and volunteers for all their hard work during this past year making it through a very difficult time and emerging ready to hit the ground running in 2021. Justin also mentioned that not only did we succeed operationally, but we also managed to complete the Education Matters Capital Campaign in early 2021 and much credit goes to Ken Evans, Campaign Chair.

Justin asked if there were any questions for the members assembled. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was moved and seconded and all voted to adjourn at 9:15 am.

Respectfully submitted

Susan Lynch, Secretary