

Amended Minutes
Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust
Meeting
January 3, 2024

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm, by Bill Richmond. Members present were B. Richmond, M. Steers, N. Cabot, N. Levine, D. Wechsler, and D. McNaughton.

W. Montgomery was absent.

P. McHugh, Town Council Liaison was present.

2.) Hazard Mitigation Plan Information Session: Ms. Kim Jacobs presented the Hazard Mitigation and Flood Management Plan for Little Compton. FEMA requires an approved mitigation plan for certain grants. Flood insurance is available through FEMA NFIP as well as through private insurance companies. If the Town participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, there is the potential to reduce NFIP flood insurance rates within the community. There is a live public opinion survey that residents may complete. The survey may be found on the Town's website. Navigate to for our residents, then to Hazard Mitigation. The link is also on the fire department's website.

Ms. Longo (19 Oliver Lane) asked about what to do regarding debris that is washing up on the beach at Sea Spray Way. Someone's stairs washed up along with other debris. It was explained that the fire department keeps track of reported damage.

Hazards that are included in the plan include: flood, wind, fires, contagious diseases, extreme heat, winter storms, and earthquakes. Climate change and sea level rise will also be included in the plan.

N. Cabot is on the committee that is working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Members were asked to let him know if there is anything LCACT would like included in the plan.

Ms. Bonnie Phinney (South Shore Road) asked if loss of trees is included. Ms. Jacob explained that trees on private property are not, but those on roadways may be.

3.) Election of Officers: Bill Richmond recommended a slate of officers that included:
William Richmond – Chairman Mike Steers – Vice-Chairman David Wechsler –
Treasurer and Secretary

Motion to move the slate as recommended made by N.L. Second by N.C. 6-0 approve.

4.) Presentation to Town Council regarding Land Use Planning Project: N. Cabot present a Power Point regarding the Land Use Planning Project. LCACT presented information to the Town Council in July and included obtaining data and a grant to obtain the data. This presentation is a follow-up to the July presentation. This study will provide the information to decide what the Town will look like in the future.

Motion to approve N. Cabot to present this Power Point presentation to the Town Council at their meeting on January 4, 2024, made by B.R. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve.

5.) Approve Minutes: The regular session minutes from the meetings of December 6, 2023, were reviewed.

Motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2023, made by N.L. Second by M.S. 5-0 approve. (D.W. abstained).

Motion to approve the regular session minutes from the meetings of October 23, 2023, November 1, 2023, November 2, 2023, and Executive Session minutes of November 1, 2023, made by B.R. Second by W.M. 6-0 approve.

Motion to unseal the Executive Session minutes from the meetings of 6/9/2022, 1/6/2021, 2/3/2021, 9/1/2021, 11/3/2021 and 11/14/2021. Also, Executive Session minutes from meetings on 1/4/2023, 1/12/2023, 2/1/2023, 3/1/2023, 7/5/2023 made by B.R. Second by N.C. 6-0 approve.

-Reconsider the unsealing of Executive Session Minutes from February 1, 2023. C. Cady explained that these minutes should remain sealed as they contain information about a property that is still being considered for acquisition.

Motion to reseat the minutes of February 1, 2023, made by B.R. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve.

- Review list of sealed minutes: The list of sealed minutes was reviewed. These minutes continue to have properties under consideration for acquisition.

6.) Consent Agenda:

- SNEP Newsletter received, dated 11-28-2023.
- Email received from USDA RI, dated 11-29-2023 re: USDA Makes Producer-Friendly Change to 2023 Notice of Loss Requirements for Two Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs.
- Email received from Farm Coast, dated 12-2-2023, re Shifting the farmland protection paradigm on the Farm Coast.
- Email received from Carter Wilkie, dated 12/4/2023, re Massachusetts Releases Farmland Action Plan 2023-2050. Mr. Wilkie addressed the members regarding his email. He discussed the importance of buildable lots on preserved ag land so that farmers can live on the property.
- Email received from USDA in RI, dated 12/5/2023, re USDA Celebrates World Soil Day.
- December 2023 SNEP Newsletter received via email, dated 12/5/2023.
- Rhode Island Farm Service Agency Newsletter dated 12/6/2023 received via email.
- December 2023 NOFA-RI-E-News, dated 12-10-2023 received via email.
- Email received from Steve Maher, dated 12-7-2023 re: Crop Cannon LCACT Land.
- Copy of Letter sent to Sakonnet Times by Mike Steers re: Anarumo received.
- Email received from USDA in RI, dated 12-11-2023, re Save Rhode Island's Ag Land and Wetlands with USDA Conservation Easements.
- Email received from RI Land Trusts, dated 12/12/2023, re Action Alert: Let the Governor Know We Need Farmland \$\$ in the Bond.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-12-2023, re Urban Agriculture Assistance Available from USDA in R.I.
- Email received from RCabot, dated 12-13-2023, re Automated laser scarecrows.
- Email received from Dunning, Savana, dated 12-13-2023, re Media Inquiry.
- Email received from Roger Green, dated 12-14-2023, re Gail and Roger.
- Email received from Farmers.Gov, dated 12-14-2023, re Gov. McKee, DEM Announce over \$1.5M in Grants to build Resilience Across Rhode Island's Food Supply Chain, Improve Processing Options for Local Producers and Businesses.
- Email from Bill Richmond to Ed Bowen, dated 12-14-2023, re Anarumo ID Documents.

- Email received from Anita Baffoni, dated 12-14-2023, re WPRI-conservation trust meeting.
 - Email received from USDA in RI, dated 12-15-2023, re USDA Reminds Specialty Crop Growers of Deadline to Apply for 2023 On-Farm Food Safety Expenses.
 - Email received from Farmers.gov, dated 12-15-2023, re Rhode Island Farm Service Agency Updates.
 - Email received from Johannarobin912, dated 12-8-2023, re LCACT inquiry regarding affordable housing.
 - Email received from Michael Roberts, dated 12-18-2023, re Inquiry from Website.
 - Email received from Farmers.Gov, dated 12-19-2023, re USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Producers Facing Inclement Weather.
 - Email received from RI Green Infrastructure, dated 12-19-2023, re Happy Holidays & Save the Date.
 - Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-19-2023, re Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs Receive 2018 Farm Bill One Year Extension, Farmers Can Now Enroll for the 2024 Crop Year.
 - Email received from Farmers.Gov, dated 12-20-2023, re: Reminder: Discrimination Financial Assistance Program.
 - Email received from Mike Hudner, dated 12-20-2023, re Letter to the Editor on Sakonnet Times 14 Dec 23 article on Little Compton Agricultural Land Trust being Defrauded.
 - Email received from Amy Mooney, dated 12/22/2023, re Invitation: Housing in Little Compton.
 - Thank you, letter, received from RI Land Trust Council, dated 12-19-2023, Thank you for renewing membership.
 - Letter received from Lonardo, Forte & Trudeau, LLP, dated 12-13-2023, re Receivership of RL Flounders, Inc and Sakonnet Realty, LLC.
- B. Richmond suggested that newsletters be sent to members via email. This will reduce the amount of paper being used in making the meeting information packets.

Motion to enter the consent agenda into the record made by B.R. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve.

7.) Review of correspondence received: None.

8.) Finance Committee / Treasurer's Report

-Account Balances

A narrative report of the accounts, for the period of November 1, 2023, thru November 30, 2023, was received from Joseph DeSantis, Town Finance Director. The report indicates that the beginning balance of all accounts was \$3,686,406.20. Revenues from transfer tax returns (\$62,800.00), donations (\$78,440.00 Land Use Planning) and interest (\$10,517.05), rent (\$0.00), Other Revenues (\$0.00) totaled \$151,757.05. Expenditures totaled \$22,448.94. The expenditures amount represents regular operating expenses (\$22,448.94) and acquisition costs (\$0.00), reimbursement for overpayment of transfer taxes (\$0.00). The closing balance for all accounts was \$3,815,714.31.

Bills to be Paid:

Whelan, Corrente and Flanders	\$ 1,992.50
Perez Landscaping	\$ 1,760.00
Cheryl Cady	\$ 3,920.00
U.S. Post Office	\$ 34.00

Mosaic Land Management	\$ 3,685.00
Cornell Cals	\$ 120.00

Motion to pay the bills made by D.W. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve.

D. Wechsler reiterated that, a few meetings back, the LCACT, at open session, had been informed that all of the funds, involved with the fraudulent Anarumo sale, had been received. Therefore, he pointed out that not only was the recent Sakonnet Times headline quite misleading, the contents of the article itself were incorrect. DW strongly criticized the article as harmful Yellow Dog Journalism.

Review of Transfer Tax Returns:

- During the period of November 18, 2023, thru November 29, 2023, transfer taxes in the amount of \$400.00 were paid to the Trust. This reflects transfer #3362.

7.) Old Business

- **Sub-committee reports:**
- **Executive Committee:** No discussion.
- **Strategic Planning Committee:**
 - **Landscape Website:** No discussion.
- **Public Outreach:**
- **LC Land Use Planning Project (Formerly Van Buren Grant):** A list of town board and commission members along with other groups has been compiled. This list will be used for a Zoom meeting with consultants to gather data and input.
 - **Website Update:** No discussion.
 - **Communication/Design Projects:**
 - **Signage: List of Properties Installation:** No update on signage. Town Council permission is needed to install a sign on Town Way. Ms. Longo presented the schematic that is on the Town's website of the drainage plan for Town Way.
 - **Ag Land Mapping** - Mapping is completed. It will be presented at next month's meeting.
- **Stewardship Committee Update:**
- **Stewardship update regarding stewardship needs, monitoring reports, baseline documentation reports:**
- **Monitoring Reports to be Sent to Landowners:** Monitoring reports are being worked on as are baseline reports. Landscape needs to be updated with these.
- **Funding for crop deterrents:** N. Cabot will be scheduling a meeting with Gary Mataronas and Professor Brown. Some local farmers will be invited to participate in the discussion regarding cost, effectiveness, etc. Lasers have been shown to be effective for birds. N. Levine asked if lasers could be used for other things in the off season.

Steve Bonner explained that the Providence Journal noted that lasers were used over mussel and oyster bed as deterrents.

- **Leases:** Approval of leases for John & June Goulart (Plat 31, Lot 42-1), Gagnon (Plat 32, Lot 18-4) and Almy (Plat 2, Lots 9-3, 9-5, 9-6) properties will be discussed at the next meeting. Additional information from each farmer is needed to complete the leases.
- **Peckham (Plat 22, Lot 15-4):** The lease for the crop portion of the property has expired. Members discussed advertising or extending the current lease.

Motion to extend the current Peckham lease with Wishing Stone Farm per their proposal for an additional three years made B.R. Second by N.C. 6-0 approve.

-Anarumo (Plat 45, Lot 1-3):

- Anarumo (Plat 45, Lot 1-3): Survey proposal from Able Engineering was received. Two options were presented.

Motion to perform Option #2 at a cost of \$12,600.00 made by B.R. N.C. 6-0 approve.

: Letter received from Dr. Beverly Anarumo, dated December 18, 2023, requesting records.

: Email to / from Dr. Beverly Anarumo from Cheryl Cady dated 12/26/2023, re Plat 45, Lot 1-2. C. Cady is preparing the records to be mailed to Dr. Anarumo.

- Blazer (Plat 43, Lot 72-1): Email received from Carol Wordell, dated 12-18-2023, re Colebrook Rd property. A tree fell on a car from the Blazer property. A claim has not been filed to date. According to Sheila Mackintosh the tree fell from a portion of the Blazer property that is owned by Sakonnet Preservation Association and not by LCACT.

- Cabot (Plat 3, Lot 2-1): Email received from rcabot, dated 12-28-2023, re: Cabot barn project for LCACT information.

: Covered Heavy Use Area (barn) to be built on conservation easement acreage.

N. Cabot addressed the members as the landowner of this property. Over one year ago LCACT approved the barn. Mr. Cabot has completed the permitting process and will begin building in the Spring of 2024. NRCS is cost sharing the project. The barn will hold 50-55 animals. It will be built in a manner to keep the animals off the ground in the winter. It will also keep manure off the ground and allow for it to be composted.

Motion to approve White Rock Farm's plan to build the barn made by B.R. Second by N.L. 5-0-1 approve (N.C. recused).

- Email received from Rupert Grantham, dated 12-13-2023, re looking for farmland. N. Cabot explained that Mr. Grantham would like to plant a Chinese Chestnut orchard. He would also plant native fruit trees. N. Cabot explained to Mr. Grantham the concerns LCACT has with an orchard. Mr. Grantham would like 3-5 acres.

- Maintenance Committee: No discussion.

- Land Protection Committee:

- Ryan (Plat 31, Lot 55-1): No discussion.

- Rice Farm (Plat 3, Lot 7-2): No discussion.

- Brooks / Cannon (Plat 45, Lot 28): This property is in probate.

- Summer Farm, LLC (Plat 3, Lot 6): No discussion.

- State Line Farm, LLC (Plat 45, Lot 14): The survey has been completed. Waiting to close.

- Hotstetler (Plat 29, Lot 30-8): No discussion. This property is being removed from the Acquisition List.

- Smith (Plat 46, Lot 48): B. Richmond to follow-up with the owner.

- Almy (Plat 22, Lot 3): This property has closed.

- Cory (Plat 45, Lot 10) and (Plat 43, Lot 44): No discussion.

- Fiorile (Plat 2, Lots 11-11 & 11-12): No discussion.

- Merrow (Plat 45, Lot 31, Plat 46, Lots 50 & 51): No discussion.

- Recreation Committee:

- Pinebridge Realty/ Pontes (Plat 20, Lots 56-4 & 51-1):

- Extension of Dunderly Brook Walking Path: D. McNaughton and N. Levine to

meet with John Berg regarding the trail.

8.) New Business:

- LCACT Policy and Procedure review: N. Cabot explained that it may be a good idea to make a policy regarding Executive Sessions. He submitted the R.I. Law for review. LCACT will need to check to determine if any policy it develops need Town Council approval.

9.) The Nature Conservancy: No discussion.

10.) New Applications:

- None.

11.) Executive Session: Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing land acquisitions/negotiations per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) (5) and Executive session pursuant to RIGL Section 42-46-5(a)(2) potential litigation made by B.R. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve. (Members were polled individually regarding the motion and voted as follows: (B.R. – yes, N.L – yes, N.C.-yes, M.S.- yes, D.M. – yes, D.W. - yes)

Entered Executive Session at 8:28pm.

Returned to Open Session at 8:57pm.

12.) Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by N.L. Second by B.R. 6-0 approve.
Adjourned 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Cady

***Approved* Executive Session Minutes
Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust
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January 3, 2024**

Executive Session: Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing land acquisitions/negotiations per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) (5) and Executive session pursuant to RIGL Section 42-46-5(a)(2) potential litigation made by B.R. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve. (Members were polled individually regarding the motion and voted as follows: (B.R. – yes, N.L – yes, N.C.-yes, M.S.- yes, D.M. – yes, D.W. - yes)

Entered Executive Session at 8:28pm.

Executive Session for the purpose of discussing land acquisitions/negotiations per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) (5)

- 1.) Brooks/ Cannon (Plat 45, Lot 28): No discussion.
- 2.) State Line Farm LLC (Plat 45, Lot 14): No discussion.
- 3.) Almy (Plat 22, Lot 3): No discussion.
- 4.) Cory (Plat 45, Lot 10, Plat 43, Lot 44): No discussion.
- 5.) Fiorile (Plat 2, Lots 11-11 & 11-12): No discussion.
- 6.) Merrow (Plat 45, Lot 31, Plat 46, Lots 50 & 51): No discussion.
- 7.) Smith (Plat 46, Lot 48): No discussion.

Executive session pursuant to RIGL Section 42-46-5(a)(2) potential litigation:

- Citizens have been complaining about the noise from crop cannons if LCACT

does not get the cannons under control. The complaint is regarding the Almy property (Plat 2, Lots 9-3 etc.). This is the only property LCACT owns that has sweet corn growing on it. LCACT will speak with the farmer and express that LCACT is supportive of farmers. LCACT is looking at other ways to assist farmer with other alternatives to the crop cannons.

Motion to prohibit the use of crop cannons on the Almy property for the terms of the lease only (2024-2026) made by B.R. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve.

- Anarumo (Plat 45, Lot 1-3): N. Cabot suggested LCACT be more aggressive regarding getting the story out to the public. This will help the public understand the preservation of the property. B. Richmond suggested LCACT should move on from this. The land use will be positive.

Returned to Open Session at 8:57pm.

Motion to return to open session made by B.R. Second by N.L. 6-0 approve (Members were polled individually regarding the motion and voted as follows: (B.R. – yes, N.L – yes, N.C.-yes, M.S.- yes, D.M. – yes, D.W. - yes)

Returned to open session at 8:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Cady