

**Approved Minutes**  
**Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust**  
**Meeting**  
**November 6, 2024**

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm, by D. McNaughton. Members present were D. McNaughton, M. Steers, N. Cabot, N. Levine, W. Montgomery, and S. Souza.

A. Wallack arrived at 6:45pm.  
Mr. Patrick McHugh was present.

**2.) Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. Section 42-46-5(a)(2) potential litigation:**

1.) Potential Litigation

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

2.) Acquisition Strategy

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

Entered into Executive Session at 6:02pm.

**3.) Return to Public Session:** Returned to Public Session at 6:59 p.m.

**4.) Vote to seal the minutes of Executive Session:** Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session made by N.C. Second by M.S. 7-0 approve.

**5.) Minutes:** The minutes from the Public Session and Executive Session meeting held on October 2, 2024, and the Site Visit minutes from October 27, 2024, were reviewed.

Motion to approve the Public and Executive Session minutes for the October 2, 2024, meeting made by M.S. Second by S.S. 7-0 approve.

Motion to approve the minutes of the Site Visit on October 27, 2024, made by N.C. Second by M.S. 7-0 approve.

**6.) Consent Agenda:**

- Email received from Kate Sayles dated 10-4-2024, re BDR Workshop, Green Bond, and More.
- Email received from Marilyn Hoffman, dated 10-14-2024, re; Fw: Pic aerial Little C.
- Email received from Michael Chace, dated 10-4-2024, re: Inquiry from Website – hunting.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, date 10-3-2024, re: Historic On-Farm Conservation Funding Assistance Available for RI Farmers & Forest Managers.
- NOFA October 2024 NOFA-RI E-News received.
- Email received from Movement Ground Farm, dated 10-3-2024, re: Announcing Our Sunset.
- October 2024 SNEP Newsletter received.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 9-27-2024, re: USDA Launches Assistance Network to Support Financially Distressed Farmers and Ranchers.

- Email received from Sheri Massa, dated 9-27-2024, re: September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 10/11/2024, re: Forest Landowners in Rhode Island eligible for funding to permanently protect their land.
- RI Land Council eNews October 2024 received.
- Rhode Island USDA Service Center October 2024 Newsletter.
- Email received from Brendan Buckless, dated 10-23-2024, re: Fw: Fire Conditions.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 10-24-2024, re: USDA To Begin Issuing \$2.14 Billion to Agricultural Producers Through Key Conservation and Safety-Net Programs.
- USDA Invests \$5.6 million in a new Regional Conservation Partnership Project in Rhode Island to Advance Conservation and Climate-Smart Agriculture.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 10-25-2024, re: NRCS joins the University of Rhode Island to host the northeast Collegiate Soil Judging Competition.
- Email received from Kate Sayles, dated 10-25-2024, re: Your Vote Matters: Protect RI’s Land and Water on Nov 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 10/28/204, re: Rhode Island State Technical Committee Meeting to be held Nov. 14, 2024.
- Westport Planning Board Notice File No: 24-028-RRL – Dennis Talbot: owner.
- Rhode Island Land Trust letter of support (membership dues request).

Motion to accept and file the consent agenda made by N.C. Second by A.W. 7-0 approve.

**7.) Correspondence**

- Email from chain to/from Colin Windham and Rusty Cabot, dated 9-5-2024, re: Fwd: Agricultural Land. N. Cabot explained that he met with Mr. Windham. They discussed what Mr. Windham wants to do. Mr. Windham may be interested in the Douglas property. He will attend the next meeting.
- Email received from Conor Murphy, dated 9-16-2024, re Inquiry from Website – Hunting.
- Email received from Michael Chace, dated 10-4-2024, re: Inquiry from Website – Hunting.
- Email received from Carter Wilkie, dated 9-27-2024, re: LCACT’s role in land use future.
- Email received from Ted Hayes, dated 10-9-2024, re: Inquiry from Website – Foraging for/Harvesting of mushrooms on Trust property. D. McNaughton suggested that he thinks this is a question of public access. N. Levine suggested that this activity may be appropriate for fee properties that are not leased. N. Cabot will compile a list of fee public properties accessible properties for the December meeting. N. Cabot will also look into this and create a policy. D. McNaughton will contact Mr. Hayes.
- RIDEM Farmland Access Program: Email chain to/from Rusty Cabot and Michelle Sheehan dated 9-10-2024, re LCACT Request.

**8.) Finance Committee / Treasurer’s Report**

**-Account Balances**

M. Steers reported that in December there will be a process for showing bank balances. He reported that the balance of all accounts was \$4,131,753.00.

**Bills to be Paid:**

- Mosaic Land Management	\$11,153.75
- Agency Landscape & Planning	\$ 8,019.85
- Cheryl Cady	\$ 5,200.00
- JA Jones	\$ 750.00
- JA Jones	\$ 250.00

- Camoin	\$ 4,000.00
- WB Mason	\$ 707.52
- Modern Printing	\$ 226.30
- DeSautel Browning Law	\$20,051.64
- Charles B. Allott, Esq.	\$ 980.00
- Brousseau Landscaping	\$ 2,550.00
- ESRI	\$ 240.00
- Brousseau Landscaping	\$ 2,050.00
- Brousseau Landscaping	\$ 2,100.00

Motion to pay the bills made by N.C. Second by N.L. 7-0 approve.

D. McNaughton reported that he spoke with Kate Sayles at RI Land Trust Council (RILTC). Membership dues are due. There is a significant increase in the suggested amount LCACT should pay. D. McNaughton will speak with Kate Sayles regarding the increase the reasons for it. This will be discussed next month. Payment of the dues will be considered at that time.

ESRI Grant Update: Carol Trocki submitted a grant to ESRI for the ARC GIS Pro Creator License. The grant was approved. The cost for the license will be \$240.00 per year.

Motion to enter Carol Trocki to enter into an arrangement with ESRI for the ARC GIS Pro Creator License at a cost of \$240.00 per year made by N.C. Second by N.L. 7-0 approve.

**Review of Transfer Tax Returns:**

- During the period of September 27, 2024, thru October 28, 2024, transfer taxes in the amount of \$552,750.00 were paid to the Trust. This reflects transfer #3422- #3439.

**9.) Sakonnet Vineyards (Plat 22, Lots 8-5 thru 8-9 and 8-11 thru 8-14): 2025 Entertainment**

**Application:** The members reviewed the Entertainment Application. The application requests approval of 14 outdoor music dates on Saturdays from 1-4pm in the courtyard from July 5, 2025, thru September 25<sup>th</sup>. The application also requests fourteen (14) dates two of which are in December for indoor music throughout the winter on Saturdays from 1-4pm.

Audience member Larry Anderson expressed concern that a precedent could be set if the Trust approves this proposal. The building official made no mention of the fact that weddings etc. were pre-existing non-conforming use, only that it is consistent with current zoning laws. Approval of the application could open the door for any farmer to do what they want. Setting this precedent may set a precedent that could result in other properties wanting to do the same.

Marissa Stashenko, Vineyard manager, explained that the application is on the November 7<sup>th</sup> Town Council agenda.

LCACT will seek counsel opinion. The opinion will be regarding setting a precedent and what it allows others to do. Next month's meeting will be the target date for the opinion.

**10.) Policies and Procedures:** N. Cabot reminded members to review the draft policies.

**11.) Sub-committee reports:**

**- Public Outreach:**

- LCACT website development update: C. Trocki is working on having the maps on the LCACT website work correctly with those in Landscape. C. Cady reported she met with Kyle Reichman from 6Square and has received training to update the website information. A. Wallack is working on the news for the news section on the website. She will send site information to members for their review.

**-Stewardship Committee Update:**

- Stewardship update regarding stewardship needs, monitoring reports, baseline documentation reports.

- Baseline Documentation Reports are needed for the Almy property and Manchester/Alvernez property.

Motion to authorize completing Baseline Documentation Reports for the Almy and Manchester/Alvernez properties made by N.C. Second by M.S. 7-0 approve.

- Peckham (Plat 22, Lot 15-4): N. Cabot reported that the lease is on the list to be completed.

- Cole (Plat 14, Lot 42): Josh Rego is leasing this property.

- BHS (Plat 38, Lot 16-2): W. Montgomery suggested that this lease not be advertised. It is a small piece of property. If there is someone who would like to farm it, they will notify LCACT.

- Bissinger (Plat 5, Lots 38-1, 40-2, and 40-5): There is a concern that was noted during a monitoring visit with the Hudner owned lot (lot 38-1). D. McNaughton will send Mr. Hudner a letter regarding the two new structures on the lot and how they relate to agriculture and the pond residue on the property.

- Pontes/ Pinebridge Realty (Plat 20, Lots 56-1 and 56-4): These leases expire on December 31, 2024.

Motion to advertise the lease using the previous advertisement (updating the dates) made by N.C. Second by A.W. 7-0 approve.

- Costa (Plat 18, Lot 3-9A99): This lease expires on December 31, 2024.

Motion to advertise the lease using the previous advertisement (updating the dates) made by N.C. Second by A.W. 7-0 approve.

- Ham (Plat 31, Lots 43-1 and 43-4): A survey of the easterly boundary is needed.

Motion to obtain a Class I survey on the eastern boundary made by A.W. Second by N.C. 7-0 approve.

W. Montgomery noted that there is plastic on the property left by the previous farmer. W. Montgomery will obtain an estimate to have the plastic removed.

- Brooks/Cannon (Plat 45, Lot 28): A survey cost estimate has been received from Able Engineering to complete a Class IV southwest and north boundary. A Class I survey will be completed on the east boundary. The cost will be \$5,500.00.

Motion to approve the survey at a cost of \$5,500.00 as described made by N.C. Second by A.W. 7-0 approve.

- Ratcliffe (Plat 1, Lots 275 and 276): The draft of the signage is complete. C. Cady to send it to the members for feedback.

Data from the trail counter was reviewed for the dates September 24<sup>th</sup> thru November 6<sup>th</sup>. The use increases on the weekends.

**- Land Protection Committee:**

- **Ryan (Plat 31, Lot 55-1):** N. Levine has revised an easement. Attorney Marion will review it. M. Steers will check for the delineation of property and the building envelop. The easement is on 16.25 acres.

- **Rice Farm (Plat 3, Lot 7-2):** This property is inactive.

- **Summer Farm, LLC (Plat 3, Lot 6):** This property is inactive.

- **Smith (Plat 46, Lot 48):** This property is inactive.

- **Fiorile (Plat 2, Lots 11-11 & 11-12):** W. Montgomery reported he spoke with the owner. W. Montgomery will follow-up.

- **Merrow (Plat 45, Lot 31, Plat 46, Lots 50 & 51):** This property has closed. A quote of \$9,350.00 has been received for a Class I perimeter survey with permanent monuments every 100 feet.

Motion to approve \$9,350.00 for a Class I perimeter survey made by N.L. Second by A.W. 7-0 approve.

- **Couto (Plat 40, Lot 40-4):** The owner has counsel to split the property prior to closing. D. McNaughton to call Attorney Marion.

- **Charles B. Almy (Plat 2, Lot 9-9):**

**12.) New Business:**

- Hunting Permission Requests: Hunting requests have been received from Randall A. Watt (Plat 20, Lot 56-4), James DeMello (Plat 20, Lot 56-4), Louis Strelbel, Jr (Plat 20, Lot 56-4), Peter Rosinha (Plat 20, Lot 56-4).

Motion to allow the three hunter who previously hunted this property made by A.W. Second by W.M. 7-0 approve.

Motion that the temporary policy be followed for any previous hunters requesting permission made by W.M. Second by N.L. 7-0 approve.

- Hunting 2025: S. Souza reported that a representative from DEM is willing to do a presentation to LCACT to see if they can offer LCACT assistance with the hunting program. DEM representative will be invited to the December meeting.

- Letter received from the IRS dated 9-24-2024: The IRS needs more time to determine if taxes are owed.

- Peckham (Plat 2, Lot 11-9): An inquiry was received from a realtor. There is a buyer who is interested in this property. The buyer would like to donate the fee to LCACT. LCACT holds an easement on a portion of the property. NRCS does not like an organization to hold both the fee and the easement to the same property. N. Cabot will follow-up with NRCS.

**13.) The Nature Conservancy:** Mr. John Berg from The Nature Conservancy explained that the boardwalk on Dundery Brook Trail needs work. The TNC is also looking at opportunities and new project.

**14.) Executive Session:** Motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing land acquisitions/negotiations per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) (5) made by A.W. Second by N.L. 7-0 approve.

(Members were polled individually regarding the motion and voted as follows: (A.W.- yes, W.M. – yes, N.L – yes, N.C.-yes, M.S.- yes, D.M. – yes, S.S. - yes)

Entered Executive Session at 8:23pm.

**15.) Return to Open Session:** 9:00pm.

**16.) Vote to seal the minutes of Executive Session:** Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session made by N.L. Second by N.C. 7-0 approve.

**17.) Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn made by A.W. Second by W.M. 7-0 approve.

Adjourned 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl Cady