

Approved Minutes
Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust
Meeting
January 8, 2024

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm, by D. McNaughton. Members present were D. McNaughton, M. Steers, N. Cabot, W. Montgomery, A. Wallack, and S. Souza.

N. Levine was absent.

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

1.) Potential Litigation

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

Entered into Executive Session at 6:31pm.

3.) Return to Public Session: Returned to Public Session at 7:00p.m.

4.) Vote to seal the minutes of Executive Session: Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session made by M.S. Second by N.C. 6-0 approve.

5.) Minutes: The draft minutes from the Public Session and Executive Session meeting held on December 4, 2024, were reviewed.

-S. Souza noted that a correction is needed to the Terrafirma section. It reads that LCACT is a member of the Land Trust Alliance and should be corrected to say LCACT is NOT a member. Motion to approve the Public Session minutes for the December 4, 2024, meeting with these corrections made by M.S. Second by A.W. 6-0 approve.

Motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of December 4, 2024, made by M.S. Second by A.W. 6-0 approve.

6.) Consent Agenda:

*Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 11-27-2024, re: Sign-up open for USDA Climate-Smart Ag & Forestry Conservation Program in Rhode Island

* December 2024 SNEP Newsletter received

* Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-5-2024, re: Rhode Island Celebrates World Soil Day 2024

* Email received from Kate Sayles, RI Land Trust Council, dated 12-9-2024, re: LT Leaders Update: Networking Events This Week

* Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-13-2024, re: New Marketing Assistance Now Available for Specialty Crop Producers

* December 2024 NOFA-RI E-NEWS received, dated 12-15-2024

* Providence Journal Article, “Little Compton hasn’t built any ‘affordable’ housing in decades”, dated 12-16-2024, received

*Email received from USDA in Rhode Island dated 12-17-2024, re: Community Meeting for Pocasset River Flood Damage Reduction Project Set for January 2025

*Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-18-2024, re Rhode Island USDA Service Center December 2024 Newsletter

* Email received from Landscape land conservation software, dated 12-19-2024, re: Landscape year in review

* Email received from USDA in Rhode Island, dated 12-23-2024, re December Updates

Motion to accept and file the consent agenda made by A.W. Second by N.C. 6-0 approve.

7.) Correspondence

- Email received from Courtney Klein, dated 12-15-2024, re: Hunting Permission.

- Email received from Joe Wood, dated 12-10-2024, re: Inquiry from Website – Hunting Permission.

8.) Finance Committee / Treasurer’s Report

-Account Balances

M. Steers reported that the beginning balance for all accounts in December was \$4,422,534. The ending balance as of December 31, 2024, totaled \$4,425,171.00. Currently a total of \$1,315,000.00 is committed leaving a net balance of available funds totaling \$3,107,534.00.

Bills to be Paid:

COT Design	\$1,250.00
DeSautel & Browning Law	\$5,490.15
Mosaic Land Management	\$9,440.00
Cheryl Cady	\$4,998.75
Meadow Mowing	\$1,340.00
Whelan, Corrente, & Flanders	\$ 449.00
Perez Landscaping	\$1,040.00
Perez Landscaping	\$2,735.00
Chubb Insurance	\$1,632.00
Chubb Insurance	\$1,382.00
Brousseau Landscaping	\$ 3,055.00

Motion to pay the bills made by A.W. Second by S.S. 6-0 approve.

Review of Transfer Tax Returns:

- During the period of November 25, 2024, thru December 2, 2024, transfer taxes in the amount of \$93,898.16 were paid to the Trust. This reflects transfer #3442 - 3448. The Transfer Taxes were reviewed. It was noted that further follow-up on transfer tax forms #3443 and #3444 is needed.

Motion to accept all transfer tax forms with the exception of #3443 and #3444 made by A.W. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve.

9.) Sub-committee reports:

- Communications:

- LCACT website development update: A. Wallack reported that 6Square has finished the site. Feedback is needed from the trustees. D. McNaughton expressed that he likes how the website works but would like some language changes. He has asked for Word

documents for the pages. It will make it easier to review. A. Wallack explained this is outside the contract scope of work. Authorization is needed to expend additional funds for these costs. A. Wallack will ask for an estimate for the additional work.

- Annual Report: A. Wallack has been working on a new version of the Annual Report. She needs the numbers for the report. C. Cady and M. Steers have updated the old version of the report and gave copies to members. This has the numbers that are needed for the new version.

- Presentation to the Town Council: D. McNaughton explained that he has started a draft presentation to the Town Council. He needs to do additional work on it. It will include LCACT's capability to do deals, and transfer tax issues. M. Steers would like it to focus on the easements LCACT owns also.

- Plan for 2025: D. McNaughton explained he would like to hire a writer to help with various communications. He would like to identify someone who will work on an hourly basis.

Motion to authorize D. McNaughton to identify a writer made by N.C. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve.

- LC 350 Event: LCACT has committed to hosting "Farmers Day". D. McNaughton spoke with Mikel Folcarelli. The LC350 Committee foresees something along the lines of AgFest, and will leave it up to LCACT to define and execute. C. Cady is working on event. She will bring a budget and outline to the February LCACT meeting.

- van Beuren Grant: The final grant report has been submitted and accepted by the van Beuren Foundation.

-Stewardship Committee Update:

- Stewardship update regarding stewardship needs, monitoring reports, baseline documentation reports. N. Cabot reported that the Baseline Documentation Report for Manchester/Alvernes property has been completed and monitoring reports are being worked on.

- Peckham (Plat 22, Lot 15-4): No discussion.

- Bissinger (Plat 5, Lots 38-1, 40-2, and 40-5): This is an open issue.

- Stone (Plat 12, Lot 79-2): The stone wall on this property was hit by a car. The driver's insurance has taken responsibility. Estimates have been received. The wall will be repaired.

- Treaty Rock Farm (Plat 5, Lot 1-6A99): N. Cabot reported that Tom Arkins has been in touch with him. The owners of the property would like to rebuild a barn that was on the property previously.

Motion to approve the building of the barn made by M.S. Second by S.S. 6-0 approve.

D. McNaughton will send a letter to the owners.

- Ham (Plat 31, Lots 43-1 and 43-4): W. Montgomery noted that the previous farmer has removed the plastic. W. Montgomery is in contact with Able Engineering for a survey of the right-of-way and the easterly boundary.

- Ratcliffe (Plat 1, Lots 275 and 276):

-Signage: A new version of the sign was reviewed. The Town needs to finish road work before the sign can be installed. The sign refers to the Little Compton Agricultural Trust in different ways: Ag Trust and LCACT. After discussion, it was determined that LCACT would be used.

Ian McKinnon noted that the sign says clamming is permitted, but RIDEM closed it a few years ago. N.C. will check into this.

An audience member stated that Town Way and Oliver Way are in a gray color and private right-of- ways are in a green color. He noted that the map is missing a ten-foot strip that is a right-of-

way. He also suggested that Oliver Lane be a different color to show it is a right-of-way to the LCACT property. N.C. will check into all of this and make changes if appropriate.

-Almy (Plat 22, Lot 3): W. Montgomery explained that a tree has fallen on the property. He has obtained an estimate to remove the tree and clear the brush on the south wall. The cost would be \$3,675.00.

Motion to approve \$3,675.00 to remove the tree and clear the brush made by W.M. Second by S.S. 6-0 approve.

- Merrow (Plat 45, Lots 30 & 31 and Plat 45, Lots 50 & 51): There is trash and debris that needs to be removed from the property. There is some discarded equipment that might be usable. It could be stored at N. Cabot's property and a note sent to people to see if they are interested in the equipment. N. Cabot and W. Montgomery will work to get an estimate for the cleanup to be presented at the February meeting.

- Land Protection Committee:

- **Ryan (Plat 31, Lot 55-1):** N. Levine and A. Wallack have a meeting scheduled next Tuesday. Mosaic Land Management is going there to do a baseline documentation report. The owners have been sent draft easement language.

- **Couto (Plat 40, Lot 40-4):** This property is in process. The owner is working with her counsel.

- **Manchester/Alvernes (Plat 22, Lots 2-1 & 2-2):** Both owners have accepted the Terms and Purchase and Sales Agreement.

- **Byrne (Plat 2, Lot 11-9):** D. McNaughton explained that NRCS does not like the easement and fee to be held by the same conservation group. It doesn't make sense for LCACT to accept the fee donation. D. McNaughton to contact the owners and explain this.

Motion to add Brooks/Cannon to the agenda for discussion purposes made by N.C. Second By S.S. 6-0 approve.

- **Brooks/Cannon (Plat 45, Lot 28):** Able Engineering went to the property to perform a Class I survey. While on the property they discovered that all boundaries for the property are stone walls. Based on this discovery they decided that a Class 3 survey would be acceptable and would save the LCACT money. The sense of the Board was to present a Class 3 survey to the Planning Board for recording.

10.) Hunting:

- Previously, it had been suggested that some hunters be part of the process to develop LCACT's hunting program. D. McNaughton has contacted Bill Richmond regarding his suggestions for hunters to participate in the process. D. McNaughton will reach out to these hunters to ask them to be on an Ad Hoc committee.

11.) New Business:

- Land Trust Alliance:

- Terrafirma- S. Souza provided information on Terrafirma. S. Souza explained that to be a member of Terrafirma, LCACT would need to answer 13 questions affirmatively. He explained that he is not sure that LCACT could meet all the requirements by February 1, 2025. One requirement is that a baseline documentation report is needed for every easement and deed restricted property.

Carol Trocki noted that twenty-eight (28) BDRs are still needed for LCACT properties and five for partner properties. She also questioned if LCACT could qualify being a municipal trust.

D. McNaughton will contact Terrafirma/ Land Trust Alliance regarding qualifications.

- Increase capacity to get work done – D. McNaughton discussed that the Trust needs to

increase its capacity to do work. He suggested hiring a second employee. The Board agreed to developing a job description that would be reviewed at the February meeting.

Motion to develop a job description for additional support made by N.C. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve.

15. The Nature Conservancy:

- John Berg (TNC) explained that TNC closed on the property where the WLNE tower is located. They now have three miles of contiguous trails. They are also working on the Tiverton Great Swamp area. They are also working on the Dunderly Brook Trail Loop.

16.) 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) and potential litigation per R.I.G.L. Section 42-46-5(a)(2) made by A.W. Second by M.S. 6-0 approve. (Members were polled individually regarding the motion and voted as follows: (W.M. – yes, N.C.-yes, M.S.- yes, D.M. – yes, S.S. – yes, A.W. - yes)

Entered Executive Session at 7:55pm.

15.) Return to Open Session: 8:58pm.

16.) Vote to seal the minutes of Executive Session: Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session made by N.C. Second by A.W. 6-0 approve.

17.) Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by N.C. Second by W.M. 6-0 approve.

Adjourned 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Cady