

Minutes

The Eighteenth Meeting Of the Niagara River Greenway Commission Beaver Island State Park Grand Island, NY September 18, 2007 2:00 pm

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Robert Kresse at 2:05 pm. Executive Director Rob Belue was directed to call the roll and a quorum of members was determined to be present.

The following Commissioners or their designated representatives were in attendance:

Robert Kresse, Chairman
Richard Soluri, Vice-Chairman
John Giardino, Treasurer
Ron Moline, Commissioner
Angela Berti, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Daniel David, for Abby Snyder New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Greg Szewczyk, New York State Department of Transportation
Rene Parsons, New York State Department of State
Rob Belue, Executive Director Niagara River Greenway Commission

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the July 17, 2007 meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC) were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by John Giardino and seconded by Ron Moline. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Comments from the Chairman

Chairman Robert Kresse reported that Paul Leuchner is home sick and we wish him well.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee

Rob Belue reported that the nominating committee consisting of Ron Moline, Paul Dyster and Paul Leuchner have met and reviewed the positions of the commission. Contact was made to each individual member presently in office and all agreed to remain in their respective positions on the commission. A recommendation from the Executive Committee was made to the Commission to accept the nominations. Richard Soluri will remain Vice Chairman, John Giardino, Treasurer, and Paul Leuchner, Secretary. Ron Moline moved to accept the nominations, John Giardino seconded the motion. Nominations from the floor

were requested. There are no further nominations. The vote was unanimous and the election proceedings were closed

Financial Report Treasurer John Giardino reported on two items relative to the financial report. He noted that the commission adopted a budget effective April 1, 2007 thru March 31, 2008 anticipating \$300,000 in funding. However, the Commission did not receive line item funding in the state budget. Accordingly, the budget was adjusted to reflect these changes, two grants were secured in the amount of, \$80,000 each from the New York Power Authority and NYS Parks, totaling \$160,000, An additional \$40,000 remained from the Quality Community Planning Grant yielding a revised budget of \$200,000. Based on the availability of funds planned expenses have been adjusted downward to achieve a balanced budget at the close of the fiscal year. The NRG 2008-2009 budget is being prepared and will again be submitted to the state for consideration. .. At this time, Chairman Robert Kresse called for a vote on the recommendation by the Executive Committee to increase the salary of the Executive Director to the previously agreed upon amount of \$80,000 annually effective October 1, 2007. A motion to approve the adjustment in salary was made by Richard and seconded by Ron Moline. The vote was unanimous.

Event Committee

Event Committee Report: Paddles Up Niagara 2007

Rob Belue presented the report on behalf of the event Chairman Paul Leuchner. He noted that a total of 236 paddle powered watercraft crewed by 250 people had participated in the river event. During the morning a number of vendors were on hand to provide park visitors with the opportunity to try out the latest in kayaks and canoes. Camp food was available for sampling thus establishing the first "Taste of Beaver Island". A number of other displays were available promoting boating safety and energy and wildlife conservation. About 500 people circulated through this paddlesports show. Following the river paddling event participants were invited to partake in a luncheon fund raiser sponsored by the Grand Island Historic Society. Funds and in kind services received from vendors and sponsors were sufficient to offset event expenses.

Executive Directors Report

Rob Belue reported that a presentation was made at the annual meeting of the Friends of Tift Preserve and on October 11, 2007 He also reported that Robert Kresse will be making a presentation at the upcoming annual meeting of LaSalle Pride.

A committee has been established to develop the internal process that will be used for project review and consultation. The Committee has completed this task after a great deal of discussion and editing. The next meeting to discuss Standing Committee Protocols for the use of the Niagara Power Project Relicensing Settlement Greenway Funds will take place on September 26, 2007 from 12:00 noon – 3:00 pm. Further details can be obtained by consulting the New York Power Authority web page.

He also added that New York State Department of State Secretary Cortez-Vasquez had been visiting the area, holding meetings to get updates on activities in the region. Rob Belue and Mayor Soluri attended some of these meetings.

Rob Belue also reported that he had met with the website designer. Project proposals will now be posted to the NRGC webpage as soon as they are received to insure the public has ample opportunity for review and comment. Members of the public can submit their comments via e-mail or the conventional mail system,

Previously the Niagara River Greenway Plan was the recipient of the Outstanding Planning Award by the Western New York Chapter of the American Planning Association. Once again, the plan has received recognition receiving the State Chapter award and the Excellence in Planning and Analysis award from the American Planning Association and the American Society of Landscape Architects respectively

Old Business

Chairman Kresse reported on the project review and consultation process that was developed for use by the NRGC. . He noted that the Executive Committee had recommended that the Instructions and forms for Project Consultation and Project Review be approved by the NRGC. A motion to approve was made by Richard Soluri and seconded by, Ron Moline. Robert Kresse commented that the forms will be posted on the NRGC website on October 1, 2007. Copies of the forms can also be picked up at the NRGC office in Beaver Island State Park.. He emphasized that complete applications must be received by the established submission date. Richard Soluri noted that the form was designed to be simple and easy to use so as to encourage the submission of projects. A vote on the motion was unanimous.

New Business

Richard Soluri reported that every event held in Lewiston this year was much more successful than previous years. He attributed this success to the Niagara River Greenway Commission efforts to bring people out, bring them together, and encourage dialogue. He suggested the possibility of granting NRGC endorsements to community events. Rob Belue responded that the long range goal of the NRGC is to expand events throughout the Niagara River Greenway

Public Comment

- Tom Frank suggested that the NRGC consider running a series of events during the months of May thru November.

Meeting Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dan David and seconded by Ron Moline. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Leuchner, Secretary
Niagara River Greenway Commission