



# Delaware Highlands Conservancy

... a land trust working with landowners to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Upper Delaware River region.

**Annual General Meeting Minutes**  
at Woodloch Springs Clubhouse  
Hawley, PA  
**Saturday, October 22, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Scott Van Gorder, Kate Hayes, Doug Hayes, Michael Cann, Karen Lutz, Mary Sue Price, Grant Genzlinger, Nancy Kiesendahl Bloch, Mary Anne Carletta, Jack Barnett, Pat Erhard, Tony Waldron, Linda Gearhart

**Staff Present:** Diane Rosencrance, Bethany Keene, Jason Zarnowski

## **Order**

Karen Lutz called the meeting to order.

Quorum: Bethany noted that 74 proxies were received, meaning over 10% of the membership were present, establishing quorum.

## **Minutes**

Motion made by Scott and seconded by Grant to approve the minutes from the 2015 Annual General Meeting; the motion carried unanimously.

## **Year in Review**

Karen shared the following comments:

### ***Board Development***

One of our key goals of 2016 was to increase the size of our Board and to identify two committee chairs. We are very pleased to welcome three new Board members: Kate Hayes who is serving on our Development Committee and is being appointed to the Executive Committee as our Member at Large; Doug Hayes who is our board liaison to the Delaware River Watershed Initiative; and Michael Cann, a member of the Land Protection Committee. Welcome!

We are also very pleased to have Pat Erhard, a long term member of the Eagle Committee moving into the Chair position and Denise Frangipane chairing our newly formed Education Committee. Denise is a former board member and brings a great deal of knowledge about the work of the Conservancy to this position.

I also want to acknowledge Tony Waldron, our legal counsel – Tony thank you for attending today. Tony is a guiding presence at many of our meetings, providing legal advice, insights and land protection expertise. You are invaluable to the Conservancy.

### ***Executive Director Transition and Staff Changes***

This past year was a year of change for our organization –in our leadership and in our staff. Late in 2015 Sue Carrier, our executive director of over 13 years, our FIRST executive director of the

Conservancy, and the architect and leader of our growth and many achievements to date, announced her decision to retire in 2016. Her time frame allowed us to complete a search and provided time for a transition – a gracious and generous decision on Sue’s part and one that reflects her love of, and ongoing commitment to, this organization.

I would like to thank the Search Committee – Brenda Ruello, Scott Van Gorder and Mary Sue Price for the time spent on search activities this year. Our search led us directly to Diane Rosencrance our new Executive Director who officially took the reins on September 1<sup>st</sup> after several months of transition meetings with Sue and the staff. So, while Diane has officially been with the Conservancy for seven weeks, I bet she would tell you it feels more like a year, given the number of projects, meetings and tasks that have been dealt with in a short period of time.

Diane has the perfect background and expertise to take us to a new level. As a Senior Director at the Natural Lands Trust with over 19 years of experience in land protection and a broad spectrum of land conservation initiatives, Diane was already involved in the work of the William Penn Foundation’s Delaware River Watershed Initiative and a member of the Pocono Kittatiny cluster. As many of you know we are wrapping up our third year of a three year grant from the William Penn Foundation; we have been granted funding for a fourth, transition year and will be drafting a grant proposal for years five, six and seven. We are extremely fortunate that Diane has a thorough working knowledge of this major initiative.

Also during the year we said good bye to Jen Sherwood, our Land Protection Coordinator who made a personal decision to change jobs to work from home and to Simon Knox who resigned when his wife, Pastor Anna, was assigned to a new congregation in the Harrisburg area. Both were losses to our organization.

However as they say, one door closes and another opens and the Conservancy’s needs were answered by two terrific and talented new staff members –Susan LaCroix is our new land protection coordinator who relocated from Washington state and Jason Zarnowski has already become indispensable handling myriad administrative tasks and supporting several committees. MaryAnne Carletta, who joined us early in the year has more than risen to the occasion, taking on new and demanding responsibilities, especially those involving our annual easement monitoring process.

With all of these changes taking place and with the pace of expectations unrelenting I want to acknowledge Amanda Subjin and Bethany Keene who have moved into leadership positions on the team – Amanda in Land Protection and Bethany in Outreach, Communications, Development and Board level support. All of our team members have kept an even keel during a time of major change, handling the usual business of the Conservancy while absorbing new projects and expectations.

### ***Renewal of Accreditation***

In 2011 the Delaware Highlands Conservancy received its accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance. Of the 1,100 members of the Land Trust Alliance, 350 are accredited, which is a true mark of distinction. It signifies that the Conservancy operates with the highest level of integrity and conducts its business under the strict requirements of the Land Trust Alliance’s Standards and Practices. Every five years the Conservancy is required to submit an extensive amount of information to renew its accreditation. Our renewal application was submitted in April and we are awaiting official word of our renewal.

### ***Land Protection***

This year the Board has voted to proceed with potential easements on eight properties in NY and PA covering approximately 1800 acres. Work is underway with the landowners to bring these to fruition in the months ahead.

### ***Conservancy Activities***

In May the Conservancy hosted its first reception for our Green Lodging Partners. We have 16 partners and through guest participation will contribute over \$50,000 this year to our revenue stream. And in September the Conservancy hosted another Women and their Woods three day educational conference for landowners in the region which received excellent reviews for its curriculum and its environment of shared experiences.

There are several very exciting and significant projects underway that Diane will discuss in just a minute that signify that we are moving to a new level of impact and influence in the region.

### ***Donor Development***

In closing, it is clear that our need to expand our donor base never ends, especially when you consider that protecting land is an effort that extends in perpetuity. We need to ensure that we have robust, diverse and secure funding sources. There's a great deal that we want to accomplish in the years ahead. We cherish our current list of donors and know that there are more individuals that share our vision and want to contribute to our mission. We welcome your participation in promoting the work of the Conservancy by reaching out to like-minded family members, friends and colleagues to encourage them to get involved.

## **Executive Director Remarks**

Diane remarked that she is thrilled to be part of the Conservancy and that the staff is great, and thanked the board for providing leadership and support. She stated that she feels the strength and passion of Barbara Yeaman and Sue Currier and is honored to take their legacy to the next step. Diane then provided an update on the William Penn, Delaware River Watershed Initiative (DRWI), stating that new board member Doug Hayes has been attending meetings. We have a three-year grant that has been extended to four years, and are in the planning phase until May of 2017 for the next three years. Diane noted that the Conservancy excels at outreach, and we are currently exploring more possibilities for landowner outreach and connecting people to the land through our initiatives. In addition, we are currently in the hiring process for a Land Protection Associate.

In addition, the Education Committee, chaired by Denise Frangipane, is planning the Environmental Learning Center. We're working with EPR, and will have two easements on the Adelaar property, hiking trails, and the ELC to connect people to nature and grow our Sullivan County presence. We'll also have a Conservation Concierge located inside the waterpark to offer programs and bring them to our ELC site.

Diane noted that although our job is to protect and conserve land, it's our duty to make sure it stays that way—once we place an easement, we need to be here forever to make sure the restrictions are in place. The Development Committee is working hard to get the funding in place, and we are seeing a lot of interest from landowners in our region to conserve their land, and from our community to go out and learn about nature.

Finally, we are receiving a lot more interest in our online outreach, from 200 followers on Facebook in 2012 to 2,100 today, and we're also on Instagram and Twitter.

## Governance

Grant noted that Michael Geitz has retired from the board and thanked him for his service as a director and past President. Grant also noted that Brenda Ruello has resigned from the board, and thanked her for her service on the Development Committee.

Grant stated that the Governance committee is continuing the search to grow the board to 15 members—in particular, looking for a board member with the skillset and passion for Forest Legacy projects.

### Election of Directors

Motion made by Grant and seconded by Scott to accept the ballot as outlined on the proxies distributed and reviewed by Grant. Motion carried by those in attendance as well as those present by proxy electing the following individuals to the Conservancy's board of directors:

Michael Cann	(for new term beginning Oct. '16)
Douglas Hayes	(for new term beginning Oct. '16)
Katherine Hayes	(for new term beginning Oct. '16)
Karen Lutz	(for second term beginning Oct. '16)
Grant Genzlinger	(for second term beginning Oct. '16)

The full list of Board of directors is as follows:

<i>Board Member</i>	<i>1st Term Begins</i>	<i>2nd Term Begins</i>	<i>3rd Term Begins</i>	<i>3rd Term Expires</i>
Greg Belcamino	Oct-09	Oct-12	Oct-15	Oct-18
John Ross	Oct-12	Oct-14	Oct-17	Oct-20
Keith Fitzpatrick	Oct-12	Oct-14	Oct-17	Oct-20
Jeffrey Moore	Oct-12	Oct-15	Oct-18	Oct-21
Scott VanGorder	Oct-12	Oct-15	Oct-18	Oct-21
Grant Genzlinger	Oct-13	Oct-16	Oct-19	Oct-22
Karen Lutz	Oct-13	Oct-16	Oct-19	Oct-22
Mary Sue Price	Oct-14	Oct-17	Oct-20	Oct-23
Michael Cann	Oct-16	Oct-19	Oct-22	Oct-25
Katherine Hayes	Oct-16	Oct-19	Oct-22	Oct-25
Douglas Hayes	Oct-16	Oct-19	Oct-22	Oct-25

## Financial Statement

The members reviewed a financial summary provided by Eric Davis, the Conservancy's accountant, reflecting a six-year trend. Karen stated that the nature of our business is that we book grants when we receive them, and the work and expenses from the grant often flow into the following year. We were pleased to end last year with a net income of \$150,00, having worked diligently to understand and overcome the two prior net losses we saw in prior years. We have consistent revenue coming in from the Green Lodging Partnership program, our donor base, and grants. Total assets are

approaching \$1,500,000 with the majority of balances in restricted funds for monitoring and legal defense, as well as a cash reserve should it be needed.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Karen Lutz with a motion made by Grant and seconded by Nancy at 11:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Keene