

MINUTES OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST  
BOARD MEETING

December 10, 2013

**ATTENDEES:**

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Rose Harvey (Chair)	Commissioner NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky	Chair, New York State Council of Parks
Gregory Capobianco	Designee for Secretary Perales Ocean and Great Lakes Policy Analyst NYS Department of State

**EXCUSED:**

Anne Reynolds	Designee for Commissioner Joe Martens Assistant Commissioner NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
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**STAFF:**

Allen G. Payne	NHT Executive Director
Paul J. Laudato	NHT General Counsel
Michael Caccese	NHT Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Purcell	NHT Program Manager and Secretary (Acting)

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Andy Beers	OPRHP, Executive Deputy Commissioner
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Commissioner Harvey called the annual meeting of the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) to order at 2:10 p.m.

**Approval of June Meeting Minutes**

Executive Deputy Beers asked for a motion to approve the June 17, 2013 Board meeting minutes, which were:

- *Moved by: Dr. Waletzky; Seconded by: Commissioner Harvey; Motion Unanimously Approved*

## **Executive Director Report**

Executive Director Payne provided a summary of projects and initiatives that he had been working on over the last seven months. including:

### **Outreach and Communications**

- Site visits to parks, sites and other facilities
- Meetings with other not-for-profit partners, State Council Commission meetings and Friends Groups
- Regular OPRHP and DEC Finance meetings
- NHT Annual Report with a “donor- focused” audience almost finalized
- Research and moving towards implementation of a donor database (Donor Perfect)

### **Partnerships and Fundraising**

- Grant secured to grow the FORCES (Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship) program
- Partnering with the National Swimming Pool Foundation to expand the Learn to Swim Program statewide (from the pilot program)
- Recreational Programming Partnership with Omni Development to provide funding and other resources for Soccer and baseball programs at Roberto Clemente State Park for 2-3 years
- Early discussions with Major League Baseball to invest in the infrastructure and operating costs to run an “Urban Academy” Baseball program
- Kickoff of the Letchworth Nature Center Campaign

### **Staff Updates**

Sarah Purcell, NHT Program Manager provided an update on some outstanding projects and new programs, including:

### **Grant Programs**

- The Adirondack Upper Recreation Hub Grant Program, jointly administered with the Nature Conservancy and DEC to be announced publicly soon
- The Hurricane Sandy Historic Preservation Grant Program, jointly administered with OPRHP was announced and applications were in the review stage

#### Administration and Communication

- Working with all Agency partners to update program staff contracts, budgets and bring in associated contract payments
- Will be updating the NHT Employee Handbook to reflect necessary changes associated with the Affordable Care Act
- NHT website project has been assigned a new project manager; NHT working to get new manager up to date and coordinate the content/ conversion processes.

Mike Caccese, NHT Chief Financial Officer (CFO) then provided a review of the Mid-Year Fiscal Updates:

#### Investments

- Activity for the 11 Investment Accounts was reviewed; each have performed at or above their respective target benchmarks
- NHT continues to benefit from savings on low Investment fees charged by Wilmington Trust Investment Advisors
- Balance Sheet was reviewed and a list of all project accounts provided

#### **Proposed Budget and Multi-Year Financial Plan**

CFO Caccese provided an overview of the Proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15 Proposed Operating Budget and Financial Plan:

#### Summary

- Proposed FY 2014-15 increases the budget of the Trust by \$49,000; representing a 6.8% increase from \$721,000 to \$770,000
- This is the first increase after several years of consistently flat budgets

- Budgetary figures for the out-years, through FY 2017-18 are projected to remain flat

**Resolution # 2013- 9 Resolution for the Natural Heritage Trust Approving Preliminary Budget for the 2014-15 Fiscal Year:**

- *Moved by: Commissioner Harvey; Seconded by: Dr. Waletzky; Resolution Unanimously Approved*

**Adjournment**

There being no other further or new business, Executive Deputy Beers asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was:

- *Moved by: Commissioner Harvey; Seconded by Dr. Waletzky; Motion Unanimously Approved*

Meeting ended at 2:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Purcell, NHT Acting Secretary