



New Hampshire Turtle Rescue Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2024
Official Minutes

Opening: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Drew Stevens virtually via Google Meet. Stevens stated that he would be structuring the meeting slightly differently than in the past by putting items needing Board approval first on the agenda to make sure high-priority decisions can receive input from everyone in case the meeting ran long and members needed to leave.

Members Present: Drew Stevens, Dallas Huggins, Chris Bogard, Jennifer Purrenhage, David Steinberg, Wendy Booth.

Members Absent: Joshua Megyesy, Sarah Kern.

Others Present: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Stevens presented four sets of minutes from previous meetings for the Board to review. He stated that the minutes could be voted on individually, or as a whole if the board chose to do so.

David Steinberg made the motion to approve the meeting minutes from December 30, 2020; April 4, 2023; August 18, 2023; and January 2, 2024. Chris Bogard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

Recording of Decisions by Electronic Polls:

Stevens reviewed the three Board conducted via email polling outside of Board meetings in order to have a record of the decisions in the official minutes.

The first vote via email poll appointed Sarah Kern to the Board and passed unanimously, 6-0-0 on October 25th, 2023.

The second vote via email poll authorized hiring a New Hampshire Turtle Rescue employee using a reallocation of \$17,000 of grant funds to pay for a temporary part-time employee for 8 months for 24 hours per week at a rate of \$18/hr. The vote was unanimous, 8-0-0, and passed on August 8, 2024.

The third email poll was to review and approve the draft employee handbook. This passed by majority vote, 5-0-3, on August 28, 2024, with three members not responding to the poll by the deadline.

Dallas Huggins made the motion to record the three electronic polls into the meeting minutes. Wendy Booth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

Old Business:



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Updates to Employee Handbook

Stevens discussed various proposed updates and comments received from the Board on the employee handbook, including paid breaks, lunch hours, and clarification of separation clauses. Bogard raised concerns about the financial feasibility of benefits packages required for full- and part-time employees. Stevens said that he would look into what those costs would be and get back to the Board. The proposed changes were then voted on individually.

Chris Bogard made the motion to amend the employee handbook to provide a 30-minute paid lunch break and two 15-minute paid breaks for employees working 8 hours or longer. Wendy Booth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

Jennifer Purrenhage made the motion to provide back pay for unpaid lunch breaks to current employees for shifts worked prior to the break policy change, not exceeding \$200. Chris Bogard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

Chris Bogard made the motion to remove the clause about refusing to work reasonable overtime from the separation section of the employee handbook. Dallas Huggins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

David Steinberg made the motion to add the Board of Directors to the list of entities that employees shall not post false information about on social media in the employee handbook. Wendy Booth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

New Business:

New Board Member Application

Stevens told the Board that there was interest from a long-time supporter in becoming a member of the Board, and that their application materials would likely be distributed before the next meeting.

Annual Meeting Scheduling

Stevens asked the Board for their availability to schedule the Annual Meeting. This meeting is where members will be reappointed and officers elected.

Jennifer Purrenhage made the motion to schedule the next Board of Directors Annual Meeting for December 30, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. Wendy Booth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

Member Updates:

President's Report

Stevens told the Board that the organization had purchased the required insurances for employing someone, including worker's comp and unemployment. There was also a small



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business property and liability policy that covers NHTR's limited assets and will allow participation in events which require a general liability policy (e.g., NH Farm & Forest). It is an annual policy, and will be reviewed when it is up for renewal in 2025.

Stevens reported that the Woodman Museum event in early August had low turnout, but still had good engagement with the members of the public who did come to the tent. He reported that there has already been interest in scheduling education programs in spring 2025, and that more details about those would be shared when solidified.

The Cove Charitable Trust grant report was mailed out in hard copy and electronically to the donor on September 5th, a few days past the deadline due to stretched resources from an unexpected influx of patients. Stevens said he would make the report available to the Board.

Treasurer's Report

Stevens explained how Facebook and the Meta platform in general have changed their donation model the year prior to one that is much less advantageous for nonprofits. It no longer covers processing and transaction fees, and all donations are actually made to the Paypal Giving Fund instead of NHTR, meaning that individual donors will no longer be counted in the IRS public support test because the donations technically come from the PPGF.

Stevens described the Spark Good Grant Program that Walmart runs, which allows you to apply for up to \$5,000 grants from Walmart locations for charitable work in the community. So far, they have received \$6,050 from 7 different stores. Five stores rejected the application, and 12 applications are still pending. Stevens plans to apply again next year and potentially engage with Walmart employees for volunteer opportunities to increase chances of receiving grants.

The organization received a \$5,000 grant from the NH Charitable Foundation's Hermit Thrush Fund, following a \$1,500 grant the previous year. Stevens intends to provide a report to the foundation if time allows, showcasing how the funds have been used and the impact on their work.

Stevens plans to seek larger grants to support the organization's growth and long-term sustainability. He plans to focus on developing a 5-10 year plan to establish a dedicated center for the organization, moving operations out of the current home-based setup.

Executive Director's Report

Huggins relayed a positive experience with the summer interns made possible through the UNH SOAR fund. This program also helped prepare NHTR for hiring employees by establishing and honing protocols and processes. Huggins plans to participate in the



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program again next year and is considering involvement in the winter career fair to attract more interns.

Huggins reported that the organization recently hired a part-time employee who has shown great dedication and passion for wildlife rehabilitation. She aims to pursue a career in wildlife rehab and has been a valuable addition to the team. Huggins hopes to secure funding to transition temporary positions into permanent part-time roles with benefits.

There were some setbacks with radio telemetry tracking this season. Two trackers (Dino's and Orion's) were found detached but without signs of predation, indicating possible issues with the adhesive used. Huggins plans to switch to a different type of putty recommended by Zoo New England and Megyesy for better adhesion. They will also work with Megyesy to review and improve the attachment process. The only active tracker is on a wood turtle named Ostrya. Huggins is concerned about the lack of protection for the valuable habitat in the subject area and plans to engage with the local Conservation Commission to advocate for its preservation.

Huggins also indicated that she aims to update the website with board member bios and photos to highlight the diverse expertise and passion of the team. This will also include a call for volunteers with specific skills that the board needs, such as financial or legal expertise.

Huggins concluded by going through the currently scheduled education events.

Additions to the Agenda:

Bogard expressed her opinion that the organization should consider getting into legal advocacy for wildlife protection in order to truly affect larger, meaningful change in pursuit of our mission. There was agreement amongst the board on this and an extended discussion followed, though no immediate action items were identified.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m. by Drew Stevens.