

Minutes of ChicoryLane Board Meeting February 6, 2025

Present: John Smith, Catherine Smith, Zim Zubler, Doug Bierly, Suzy Yetter, Thom Rippon, Loanne Snavelly, Adam Smith

Absent: none

Visitors: Lauren Smith, Ian Smith, Dana Reed, Bill Rathfon, Annie Stubbs

John Smith called the zoom meeting to order at 7:03 pm and confirmed the presence of a quorum. He thanked all for attending and specially welcomed visitors, thanking them for voluntary efforts at ChicoryLane to maintain buildings (Ian Smith), inform the public (Lauren Smith), and photograph landscape features as well as conservation projects (Bill Rathfon).

Monthly Reports

Chair's report

Updates:

- Finances (all operating expenses, not only activities expenses, can go toward IRS-required spending by ChicoryLane Foundation)
- Personnel (Lauren Smith is contracted for 2025 with salary as ChicoryLane communicator; Lauren will additionally support events—up to 10 hours per event—at a \$20 hourly wage.

Actions in process:

- Application to Gregg Township for conditional use as 'indoor-outdoor recreation' in the agriculture zone to permit the barn to be used for meetings and other public events related to conservation.
- Decker Road outreach project to conserve a portion of a farm owned by Elam and Daniel Stoltzfus, in cooperation with the owners and with US Fish and Wildlife Service. Board members commented favorably on engaging with Amish landowners who want to conserve their property. (Attorney Debbie McDermott had earlier commented favorably on adding 'outreach' to the ChicoryLane Foundation's mission.) John proposed that Decker Road project costs be shared by ChicoryLane Foundation and the owners. Because Foundation expenditure is proposed, board member Thom Rippon called for a board vote on cost-sharing for this project. Thom moved to proceed with the project as described; Loanne Snavelly seconded; the motion was unanimously adopted.

Committee Reports

For the Finance Committee Doug Bierly reported as treasurer. ChicoryLane statements for January show assets of \$18,000 (donated by the Smith family) with \$9000 expenditures and \$9000 available. Doug noted that the Smith family intends to increase the assets after ChicoryLane achieves IRS status as a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation. Thom Rippon moved that the treasurer's statement be accepted for the purposes intended; Suzy Yetter seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

For the Activities Committee Suzy Yetter reported as co-chair that seven public education and engagement events will be held in 2025 including two open house days. Board members suggested inviting local groups to the open house days to expand awareness of ChicoryLane.

Governance

There is no Governance Committee. Thom Rippon in the December board meeting noted need for a policy on staggered terms for directors. In this February meeting, John asked to postpone consideration of staggered terms until the June meeting and the board agreed to postpone.

Public Comments

Ian Smith remarked that his voluntary role, while primarily oversight and management of ChicoryLane's structures, will in 2025 include development of an operations manual to inform current and future users of the facilities. Ian further suggested the addition of exploration of the house-and-barn area during open house days and recommended that liability waivers be signed by participants at public events. Board members asked whether ChicoryLane has liability insurance covering attendees at events; John answered yes. Members also endorsed the idea of an operation manual and agreed with the advisability of having waivers.

Lauren Smith agreed to administer waivers as part of event support. Lauren further asked about the process of developing board membership and about desired qualities in board members. Catherine agreed that policy and procedures on board development are needed and offered to draft them for discussion.

Executive Session

John called the board into executive session and asked visitors to leave the meeting. Dana Reed, who was present, was then introduced as a potential new board member. Dana had been nominated by John and Catherine. Directors had read her resume in the documents associated with this meeting's agenda. Dana spoke about her interest in serving. Thom commented on her qualification as a certified PSU Master Naturalist and characterized her as a "good fit" with ChicoryLane's mission. The board unanimously approved Dana as a ChicoryLane director.

In general discussion:

- Catherine proposed an interim procedure for board member selection to include Catherine's collection of nominee names, contact with candidates for vetting, then bringing good candidates to board attention. Directors agreed with that proposal.
- Thom's suggestion that the board hold its next meeting in the hour before the June 7th open house event will be considered by the organization's officers.

Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm

Catherine F. Smith, secretary