



The Metacomet Land Trust is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of open space and natural resources in South Central Massachusetts. Metacomet proudly serves the communities of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Franklin, Hopedale, Mendon, Millbury, Millville, Norfolk, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge, Webster, and Wrentham

**Please Join Us for Our Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 3, 2021 via Google video conference. Log on at 6:45 pm, Meeting from 7:00-7:30**

Due to the current Covid-19 conditions we will be hosting our annual meeting on-line. If you would like to attend, please click on this link [meet.google.com/vga-rvkg-ses](https://meet.google.com/vga-rvkg-ses). To join by phone, the number is (US) +1 601-884-1351 PIN: 207 528 401#

### 2021 Annual Meeting Agenda

- I. Meeting Called to Order
- II. 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes
- III. 2021 Annual Report, Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement
- IV. Election of Directors to the Board
- V. Adjourn

#### Proxy Vote:

**If you are not able to join the annual meeting**, please fill out and return this portion as your proxy ballot. This will count toward the required quorum of 20 voting members or 20% of all dues paying members (whichever is larger). Your proxy instructs Lisa Moczynski, President, or Russell Holden, Vice President, to act on your behalf.

METACOMET LAND TRUST 2021 ANNUAL MEETING MEMBER PROXY. I authorize MLT Board President Lisa Moczynski or Vice President Russell Holden to exercise my vote at the 2021 Annual Meeting for the ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS, APPROVAL OF 2020 MEETING MINUTES, APPROVAL OF THE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT and any MOTIONS that come before the membership.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE:: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your proxy to Metacomet Land Trust, PO Box 231, Franklin, MA 02038 to arrive no later than Thursday, May 27, 2021. You may also simply photograph the signed form and email the photo to [info@metacometlandtrust.org](mailto:info@metacometlandtrust.org).

***We Love Where We Live – And We Know You Do, Too!***

## President's Message

Dear Metacomet Land Trust members,

Thank you for your support and dedication through these trying times. This past year we found ourselves more grateful than ever before for our open spaces, pollinator gardens and beautiful trails because, in them, we found the peace and fortitude to help us overcome the obstacles we faced.

We had to adjust to keep everyone as safe as possible. We used our on-line presence to guide people to our special places. We all learned new skills and held nearly all of our board meetings virtually. We offered programs on-line. We championed the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day with a virtual appeal and you generously responded so that we could continue our work in our region's communities.

We were pleased to accept our very first Millville land donation of 6.1 acres from the Berthelette family. A conservation restriction is also on the property, held by the Millville Conservation Commission. We thank the Berthelette's for their generosity and for protecting a unique parcel of their land and its habitat in perpetuity.

At the end of the year we were awarded a Conservation Partnership Grant from the Commonwealth's Department of Conservation and Recreation to purchase a parcel in the Peppercorn Hill area of Upton. We are excited to partner with the Sudbury Valley Trustees which is another regional land trust. Both trusts are fortunate to work in Upton and that the town voted to purchase three other abutting parcels. The state recognized this with a grant to assist MLT's purchase. We plan to record the deed and conclude our grant obligations in mid-2021.

With your help, we will continue to carry out our mission in the 15 communities in which we work. If you wish to protect your property or know of a special place that should be saved, please contact us.

Lastly, do your best to get outside every day so that you can enjoy the special beauty and rejuvenation that only our great outdoors provides.

In conservation,

*Lisa Moczynski*

Lisa Moczynski, President

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### Having a Ball! – Local Students Find a New Way to Plant Spring Wildflowers

This Spring seed balls made by students at Upton Memorial School and the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational High School were dispersed on the pollinator field at the Szerlag Farm Preserve in Northbridge. The field is part of a 24-acre parcel of conserved land owned by Metacomet Land Trust. Metacomet committed to creating this field three years ago to support the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor in its efforts to promote pollinator gardens throughout the area and to educate people about the importance of native pollinators. The field and woodland trails are open to the public.



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## Board of Directors

The Metacomet Land Trust is governed by a Board of Directors elected by our members to three year terms. Our Board of Directors includes representatives from towns throughout the service area, each of whom brings years of experience in local conservation and planning. You are welcome at all Board meetings; please email us to receive advance notice.

<b>President</b> - Lisa Moczynski, Douglas	(term expires 2023)
<b>Treasurer</b> - Susan Speers, Franklin	(term expires 2022)
<b>Vice-President</b> - Russell Holden, Uxbridge	(term expires 2022)
<b>Secretary</b> - Patrice Murphy, Mendon	(term expires 2021)*
Tom Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2021)* **
Larry Rettman, Franklin	(term expires 2023) **
Peg Rothwell, Hopedale	(term expires 2021)*
Michael Rodriguez, Millville	(term expires 2023)
Kyle Pribish, Norfolk	(term expires 2021)*
Doug Williams, Norfolk	(term expires 2022)
Barbara McNamee, Northbridge by board	(term expires 2022)
Mike Penko, Upton	(term expires 2021)*
Christine Scott – Upton	(term expires 2022)
Anne Hanscom, Uxbridge	(term expires 2023)

\*\* Founding Board Members, \* Members' terms expiring



## Fundraising Continues for the Kelly Purchase at Peppercorn Hill in Upton

As we hope you have heard, Metacomet (MLT), Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) and the Town of Upton are working to preserve additional land around Upton's Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area. MLT and SVT are



Peppercorn Hill (MLT and Upton Conservation Commission members). Photo by Laura Mattei (SVT)

raising funds to purchase one 23-acre parcel on June 1st. We are well on our way, but still need about \$20,000 to cover all costs of this wonderful conservation opportunity.

An anonymous foundation has agreed to match the next \$10,000 in contributions on a 1:1 basis, so all donations will go twice as far! If you have not already made a gift to this special campaign, please consider helping us reach our goal by our deadline of June 15th. You can donate through this page at Sudbury Valley Trustees, which is collecting donations on our behalf:

<https://tinyurl.com/2u3sr9w2>.

And, if you've already helped -- THANK YOU!

## How To Reach Us at The Metacomet Land Trust

Call us at 508-271-7131

Website: [www.MetacometLandTrust.org](http://www.MetacometLandTrust.org)

Twitter: @MetacometLandTr

Email: [info@metacometlandtrust.org](mailto:info@metacometlandtrust.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MetacometLandTrust/>

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## 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2020 Annual Meeting was held on May 21, 2020, virtually due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions: 7:00 pm online and via phone.

In attendance were: Michael Angelo Rodriguez, Lisa Moczynski, Russell Holden, Susan and Buzz Speers, Patrice Murphy, Barbara McNamee, Shirley Moczynski. Christine Scott, Mike Penko, Peg Rothwell, Larry and Marge Rettman, Brad Waterson, Kyle Pribish, Anne Mazar, Charlotte Richardson, Richard Auger, Ann and John Hanscom. Marcella Stasa @ (7:11), Tom and Donna Bik @ (7:14), Nick and Margot Bik, Casey Bik, and Bill Taylor @ (7:15) and Barbara Webster @ (7:26). 13 Proxies were recorded by mail and email.

Seeing that there was a quorum, President Lisa Moczynski called the meeting to order at 7:06.

President Moczynski welcomed all and introduced herself. She commented that the Metacomet Land Trust is running under the constraints of the corona virus and state advisories. It is harder to do site walks and to hold meetings, but we are adapting.

The Annual Report for 2020, including the Treasurer's Report, was sent out to members via mail and email.

Treasurer Susan Speers reported that the strong fiscal position of the trust does not reflect that the temporarily restricted funds are not available to use as cash for operational purposes. We have hired a new CPA after former one moved out of state and have been meeting with our new CPA via video conferencing.

Motion to accept the 2020 Annual Report including the 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes and the Financial Statement for calendar year 2019 was made by Richard Auger, seconded by Michael Angelo Rodriguez. Approved unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of directors to the board. The following directors have terms expiring in 2020 and were asking to be re-elected: Lisa Moczynski, Douglas; Larry Rettman, Franklin; Michael Angelo Rodriguez, Providence; and Ann Hanscom, Uxbridge. Call for volunteers to run for board positions (none).

Motion to re-elect directors made by Peg Rothwell and seconded by Richard Auger. Approved.

Motion to close nominations by Russell Holden, seconded by Richard Auger. Approved.

Motion to re-elect the four expiring board members by Russell Holden, seconded by Richard Auger. Approved.

In other business President Moczynski recognized that we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and Treasurer Speers noted that we had organized a matching funds drive for our Earth Day Appeal that was very successful and raised \$3,400 in unrestricted funds for the Trust.

Our Treasurer reminded everyone that our traditional Silent Auction fundraiser is being held online this year and is open for several more days on eBay. Generous donations include books, handmade items and more.

Motion to adjourn the Annual Meeting was made by Tom Bik and seconded by Richard Auger. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patrice Murphy, Secretary

**Treasurer's Report for the Calendar Year 2020**  
**Metacomet Land Trust, Inc.**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
As of January 1, 2021

		Total	
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
<b>Bank Accounts</b>			
<b>Unrestricted Operating Checking Account</b>	\$	8,250.62	
<b>Unrestricted Operating Reserve in Money Market Account</b>	\$	18,246.20	
<b>Money Market Account (includes the following special funds)</b>	\$	166,267.99	
Berthelette Property Fund			\$ 62.93
Educational Materials Fund			\$ 442.49
Land Acquisition Fund			\$ 1,818.16
Mendon Conservation Projects Fund			\$ 8,476.06
MLT Sign Fund			\$ 5,462.15
Leland Wild Fund			\$ 128,760.00
Szerlag Farm Property Fund (Northbridge)			\$ 3,000.00
<b>Additional Special Purpose Bank Accounts</b>			
CR Protection Endowment	\$	22,696.85	
CR Stewardship Expense Fund	\$	10,885.27	
SNETT Special Projects	\$	1,278.59	
Lake Manchaug Projects	\$	3,671.44	
Whitney Trail Upton	\$	1,484.42	
Bonner Property Fund (New)	\$	3,501.53	
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	\$	<b>218,036.71</b>	
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>			
Lease Fees Receivable	\$	45.00	
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	\$	<b>45.00</b>	
<b>Other Current Assets</b>			
Undeposited Funds	\$	1,029.20	
Prepaid Expenses	\$	1,608.89	
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	\$	<b>2,638.09</b>	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	\$	<b>220,719.80</b>	
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Permanently Restricted Land and Affordable House Lots*	\$	4,656,800.00	*1/1/2021
Gifts of Permanently Restricted Land in 2020	\$	128,100.00	Assessed Val
Unrestricted Open Space	\$	99,900.00	
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	\$	<b>4,884,800.00</b>	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$	<b>5,105,519.80</b>	
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>			
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Accounts Payable</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$	987.24	
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	\$	<b>987.24</b>	
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	\$	-	
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	\$	-	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	\$	<b>987.24</b>	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	\$	<b>987.24</b>	
<b>Equity</b>			
Unrestricted Land	\$	99,900.00	
Temporarily Restricted Funds	\$	191,539.89	
Permanently Restricted Land	\$	4,784,900.00	
Net Revenue	\$	1,624.33	
<b>Total Equity</b>	\$	<b>5,077,964.22</b>	
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	\$	<b>5,078,951.46</b>	

Financials are unaudited results for the calendar year 2020

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## Treasurer's Report for the Calendar Year 2020

With the help of our members and donors, Metacomet raised sufficient funds to cover our operating costs last year. The Board held our expenses to the absolute minimum by postponing several planned projects while also moving in-person fundraising to virtual platforms. A special online auction replaced our Silent Auction, usually held during our Annual Meeting, and revenue was greatly helped by a match campaign for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Our reserved funds helped to cover expenses for due diligence on land projects, allowing us to cover most of our attorney's time and recording fees. We wrapped up the year with a December membership appeal which helped us end the year with a modest operating loss of \$1,900.

The operating income loss above does not take into account the generous gifts of permanently restricted land and temporarily restricted cash gifts to care for our land and build our CR Defense Fund; these restricted funds cannot be used to cover our operating costs. Last year, our CPA firm, Sullivan, Smith and Brown of Westborough, helped the trust to complete an update of our accounting of restricted funds. Our restricted funds are the great majority of our cash with 88%, over \$192,000, reserved for special purposes. This is why we – and so many other nonprofits – regularly ask our friends to direct gifts to “where most needed.”

Susan Speers, Treasurer

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### Help us continue our conservation work for the next generation!

Have you renewed your membership for 2021? Your dues and donations help us to continue our work of land preservation, conservation, and environmental education.

To join or renew your membership in the land trust, please fill in below and mail to  
Metacomet Land Trust, P.O. Box 231, Franklin, MA 02038

Friend	\$ 25.00	_____
Steward	\$ 50.00	_____
Naturalist	\$ 100.00	_____
Forester	\$ 250.00	_____
Protector	\$ 500.00	_____
Other		_____

I would like to make an additional gift to the Metacomet Land Trust. Please apply my gift towards:

The Erik Anderberg Stewardship Fund \_\_\_\_\_ As needed \_\_\_\_\_

Metacomet Land Conservation Fund \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes! I am interested in volunteering!

Check out our Website: [www.MetacometLandTrust.org](http://www.MetacometLandTrust.org). You can renew online!

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# Stewardship Report



Szerlag Kiosk

Work continued on the Szerlag Farm Pollinator Field in Northbridge, which supports more than two dozen species of grasses and flowering plants. Whitinsville Troop 155 Eagle Scout candidate Daniel Maccaline completed an excellent kiosk at the Szerlag Preserve. Volunteers from Blackstone Valley Technical High School and Nipmuc High School assisted with planting and path creation at the field and helped to locate and mark property bounds at Franklin Woods in Franklin. Volunteers from Upton's Memorial School and Blackstone Valley Tech created a "Seed Ball" program to increase the diversity of plants in the pollinator field. We trialed this program "at-a-distance" during the pandemic, and literally launched over 100 seed balls onto the field.

We look forward to involving more youth next year. Native wildflower seeds for this project were collected at local Fox Fire Farm in Uxbridge, which we hold in conservation. See our webpage for more on the story: <https://tinyurl.com/45947xft>. We are also working with the Town of Mendon to create the Taft Orchard Pollinator Meadow and recreational paths on conservation land visible from Route 16. Our directors led data collection for numerous vernal pools in Uxbridge, Mendon and Blackstone, and students from Nipmuc High School AP Environmental Studies class participated in Vernal Pool education.

Site inspections at three Metacomet properties, Franklin Woods and Lady Bug Trail in Franklin, and Manchaug Overlook in Sutton, discovered boundary encroachments which Metacomet is working to resolve. Trail maps were prepared for the Szerlag and Stevens Pond (Sutton) preserves. All Metacomet preserves are open to the public. Miles of wooded trails are present at Franklin Woods, and the Hop Brook (Blackstone), Stevens Pond, and Szerlag Farm reserves.

Metacomet directors visited all properties protected by conservation restrictions (CR) as part of our yearly CR monitoring program. We are working with the owners of several properties to resolve boundary encroachments discovered on their protected land. We are also actively working with a town and the state to remedy a serious encroachment by a developer and several abutters onto conservation land specifically reserved for a state listed "species of special concern."

## Records Project

Metacomet does not currently have an office and 30+ years of organizational records are kept in boxes by several board members. Work began in 2019 to preserve, organize and digitize the documents and photographs. records. By the end of 2020, approximately 13 GB of data were uploaded on the Trust's Google Drive Account. Much more sorting and scanning remains to be done.



### Site Inspections and Clean Up

To the left: Steven's Pond before.

To the right: Steven's Pond after.

Our vice president, Russell Holden of Uxbridge, visited all of the properties that we own (in fee) and offered to report on any stewardship problems and to share his insight into their special natural heritage characteristics, His report can be found on our web site at [www.metacometlandtrust.org](http://www.metacometlandtrust.org).



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## Conservation

Metacomet gratefully accepted the donation by Raymond and Diane Berthelette of our first preserve in Millville, the Alfred and Rina Berthelette Preserve. The beautiful forested property contains a mix of upland and wetland habitats and a seasonal stream which flows into the Blackstone River. The preserve is located near the Millville Elementary School; Metacomet and the Berthelettes hope it will be used as an outdoor classroom. The remnants of a split boulder quarry are present on the property. The age of the boulder quarry is unknown, but the quarrying of boulders in New England is believed to have ended by around 1870. The Millville Conservation Commission holds a Conservation Restriction on the property to assure its permanent protection. Many thanks to the Berthelettes and to the Conservation Commission for supporting this project!



Stream on the Berthelette Preserve in Millville

Metacomet partnered with the Town of Upton and the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) to permanently protect four parcels owned by the Kelly Family. The 66 acre Kelly property is intertwined with the Town of Upton's Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area, which lies in close proximity to additional conservation lands protected by Upton and the neighboring towns of Hopkinton and Milford. Together, these conserved lands and the Kelly property encompass over 400 acres and include a popular, 6-mile-long trail network. Metacomet was awarded a \$56,500 Conservation Partnership grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to partially fund purchase of one of the Kelly parcels. SVT, a regional land trust that works in Upton and other Sudbury River watershed communities, obtained a \$45,000 foundation grant to help purchase the MLT parcel. The other three parcels will be purchased by the Town of Upton using Community Preservation Act Funds. Closing is expected to occur in June of 2021.

In addition, MLT worked with potential donors and partners on several promising land protection projects in our member towns.

We are also pleased that two communities in our service area, Franklin and Hopedale, adopted the Community Preservation Act.

Metacomet Land Trust currently owns 562 acres of Conservation Land and holds 12 conservation restrictions on 352 acres. The Trust also monitors a conservation restriction held by the Town of Mendon, co-owns 20 acres in Sutton with the Massachusetts Division of Conservation and Recreation Commonwealth, and owns 7 affordable housing lots in Franklin. Properties conserved by Metacomet as of December 2020 are located in Bellingham, Blackstone, Franklin, Mendon, Millville, Millbury, Northbridge, Norfolk, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge, and Wrentham.

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## Volunteers Welcome!

**Please Volunteer!** We need your help! The land trust depends on the generosity and spirit of volunteers to educate young and old about the environment around us and to help with due diligence in conducting stewardship inspections. Sign up at our website at <https://tinyurl.com/jcuhdevw> or email us at [info@metacometlandtrust.org](mailto:info@metacometlandtrust.org) or call us at 508-271-7131 if you can help.

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