



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 Virtual Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 16, 2022.**

**The business meeting will be followed by a program on  
Beecology: How You Can Help Native Bumblebees  
given by Dr. Rob Gegear of UMass Dartmouth!  
Meeting and Program from 6:30-8:30**



Due to 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#**

**2022 Annual Meeting Agenda**

- I. Meeting Called to Order
- II. 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes
- III. 2022 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 2022 ANNUAL MEETING MEMBER PROXY. I authorize MLT Board President Lisa Moczynski or Vice President Russell Holden to exercise my vote at the 2022 Annual Meeting for the ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS, APPROVAL OF 2021 MEETING MINUTES, APPROVAL OF THE 2022 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, 2022. You may also simply photograph the signed form and email the photo to [info@metacomelandtrust.org](mailto:info@metacomelandtrust.org).

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

## President's Message

Dear Metacomet Land Trust members,

I was on my way to Tuft's Wildlife Clinic in Grafton with a dead female opossum and her tiny babies in a box beside me. The heater was blasting. Who knows how long they had been lying there in the road before my sister saw the little ones still struggling to stay alive?

I turned up Hill Street in Northbridge and saw a woman I recognized on the opposite side of the road. I slowed down a bit as I drove by and she yelled that she was picking up roadside trash. It was Barbara from our Board of Directors.

Our Treasurer, Susan, spends hours tracking our spending and building budgets to keep us going; Patrice our Secretary, takes our board meeting minutes, signs our official votes and oversees our Mendon stewardship projects, too. Our Vice President, Russ from Uxbridge, documents the biodiversity (and problems) that can be found on our properties.

And Mike from Upton is working on the baseline documentation for a property that will be protected by a conservation restriction while Tom is keeping a watchful eye on our Hop Brook property in Blackstone.

Whether it's helping wildlife, picking up someone else's trash or giving hard-earned dollars to save more open space, we are connected through our work and through our love of this place. We are fortunate that we get to celebrate the natural beauty around us, that we are able to do something to keep our all-volunteer land trust going, to keep the Earth going.

We depend on you, our members, because you're the foundation of this organization and your contributions – large and small – enable us to do great things in the face of increasing demand, development and habitat loss.

Please do what you can to help us fortify our Land Preservation Fund (see article on page 3). We are forever grateful for all *you* do.

Most humbly and in conservation,

*Lisa Mosczynski*

Lisa Mosczynski, President



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## Become a Beecologist: How You Can Help Native Bumblebees

**Biologist Rob Gegear, speaker at our Annual Meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>, wants our help.** He wants us to become Beecologists, as in, citizen scientists who help with the study of the ecology of bees, specifically, our native bumblebees. He wants us to get to know them by taking photos, and contribute to scientific research by sharing those sightings and, in the process, learn to make gardens and landscapes that support them.



Rob Gegear, an assistant professor of biology at University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, is one of the founders of the [Beecology citizen science project](#), with Worcester Polytechnic Institute, funded with a grant from the National Science Foundation. Begun in Massachusetts, it is now getting data from citizen contributors over a wider area, and welcomes photos of bumblebees on flowers from throughout North America.

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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 Moczyński, 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 2024)
Tom Bik, Blackstone	(term expires 2024)**
Larry Rettman, Franklin	(term expires 2023)**
Peg Rothwell, Hopedale	(term expires 2024)
Michael Rodriguez, Providence	(term expires 2023)
Kyle Pribish, Norfolk	(term expires 2024)
Doug Williams, Princeton/Norfolk	(term expires 2022)*
Barbara McNamee, Northbridge	(term expires 2022)*
Mike Penko, Upton	(term expires 2024)
Christine Scott, Upton	(term expires 2022)*
Anne Hanscom, Uxbridge	(term expires 2023)

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



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## Our Land Preservation Fund Campaign Needs You!

As our Treasurer likes to remind us: **Success comes at a cost.** Because we've happily made a commitment to success, we are on track to pass **1,000 acres saved** this year!

We've been able to succeed due to our **Land Preservation Fund** that was begun years ago with a bequest from Allan Shaw of Norfolk. Allan was a Metacomet Board member, a longtime member of Norfolk's Conservation Commission and an ardent environmentalist. He understood the need to invest in our local environment and his farsighted bequest has helped us successfully conclude important land preservation projects in the communities we serve. Now that fund, due to our conservation successes, has been depleted.

Our **Land Preservation Fund** is specifically designated to cover the out-of-pocket due diligence costs needed to complete land preservation transactions: attorney's fees (that we are fortunate to have deeply discounted), surveys, title searches, environmental contamination assessments, recording fees and more.

Our 2022 campaign has set a **goal of raising \$15,000** to replenish this depleted fund and we've received a generous challenge donation of \$5,000 that will let us **match your generous contributions.**

**Please donate today.** Send a check or donate on-line through our website (see below). We are excited to help more land owners and municipalities save land for the future!

### 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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## 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2021 Annual Meeting was held on June 3, 2021, virtually online and via phone, due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Having a quorum present, the Meeting was called to order by Moczynski at 7:06 p.m.

Lisa welcomed the audience and recited the organization's mission. She thanked the participants for being patient in attending yet another virtual meeting and said that it was great to see everyone after a year. She shared that the board has held each monthly meeting this way, managed to continue to conduct our business as an organization, and thanked everyone. She told the audience that the land trust was on the cusp of recording a parcel of the Kelly Farm in Upton by partnering with the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) and with a grant from the Commonwealth's Conservation Partnership Grant Program for due diligence and purchase. We are grateful that we could meet our fundraising goals with the strong support of the partnering land trust.

She thanked Upton board member Mike Penko for advocating for the purchase and the grant and for closely coordinating with our partners. Peg Rothwell of Hopedale was also recognized for producing the annual report again this year and we are grateful to Michael Angelo Rodriguez for this technical expertise in setting up our virtual meeting. Thank you also to Patrice Murphy, our Secretary, and Russell Holden, our Vice President, and especially to Susan Speers, our Treasurer, for reminding us that success comes with a cost! All members have stepped up with the pandemic - please give yourself a round of applause!

A motion was made by Tom Bik and seconded by Ann Hanscom to accept the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Peg Rothwell and seconded by Michael Angelo Rodriguez to accept the 2021 Annual Report, Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement. Motion was approved.

The meeting's business then moved to the Election of Directors to the Board. Patrice Murphy, Kyle Pribish, Tom Bik, Mike Penko and Peg Rothwell were all nominated. A motion to re-elect the slate was made by Michael Angelo Rodriguez and seconded by Susan Speers. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:17 pm by Christine Scott and seconded by Shirley Moczynski. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patrice Murphy, Secretary

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

Have you renewed your membership for 2022? 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	_____	Forester	\$ 250.00	_____
Steward	\$ 50.00	_____	Protector	\$ 500.00	_____
Naturalist	\$ 100.00	_____	Other		_____

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

Metacomet Land Preservation 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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# Treasurer's Report for the Calendar Year 2021

Metacomet Land Trust, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position 5/5/2022

As of December 31, 2021

## ASSETS

### Current Assets

#### Bank Accounts

Unrestricted Operating Funds \$ 26,285

#### Temporarily Restricted Funds

Berthelette Property Fund	\$	63
Educational Materials Fund	\$	442
Land Acquisition Fund	\$	1,500
Mendon Conservation Projects Fund	\$	8,681
MLT Sign Fund	\$	6,282
Leland Wild Fund	\$	128,760
NEW: Fee Property Stewardship Fund	\$	750
Szerlag Farm Property Fund	\$	3,000
CR Protection Endowment	\$	12,628
SNETT Special Projects	\$	1,280
Lake Manchaug Projects	\$	3,673
Whitney Trail Upton	\$	1,586
Bonner Property Fund	\$	3,505

Total Bank Accounts \$ 198,434

#### Accounts Receivable

Lease Fees Receivable \$ 45

Total Accounts Receivable \$ 45

#### Other Current Assets

CR Stewardship Investment Account (new) \$ 26,617

Undeposited Funds \$ 442

Prepaid Expenses \$ 3,234

Total Other Current Assets \$ 30,293

Total Current Assets \$ 228,772

### Fixed Assets

Permanently Restricted Land \$ 4,845,365

Unrestricted Open Space \$ 109,100

Total Fixed Assets \$ 4,954,465

**TOTAL ASSETS \$ 5,183,237**

## LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

### Liabilities

Total Liabilities \$ -

### Equity

Unrestricted Land \$ 109,100

Temporarily Restricted Funds \$ 198,767

Permanently Restricted Land \$ 3,977,062

Net Revenue \$ 7,095

Total Equity \$ 4,292,023

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY \$ 4,292,023**

Financials are unaudited results for the calendar year 2021

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

## Treasurer's Report for the Calendar Year 2021

2021 was a year to be proud of for Metacomet. Not only did we purchase land for the first time in a generation, but we covered the cost of that remarkable achievement thanks to donations from friends far and wide, a grant from the Commonwealth, and much assistance from the Sudbury Valley Trustees. In addition to that land purchase, Metacomet also was able to cover the expenses associated with a gift of land in Sutton and all of our normal operating costs.

We managed our activities carefully and ended 2021 with positive net revenue of \$7,000. Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible.

Other key items last year for the Land Trust:

- We have increased the level of insurance carried by the Trust and purchased an Umbrella Policy.
- We established an investment account to get a better rate of long-term return on a portion of our Conservation Restriction Stewardship Funds. The investment account showed a positive return of more than \$1,600 by 12/31/2021.
- Thanks to a donation from a member of the Board, MLT established a new restricted account to save for the management costs at the properties we own. Previously, we depended on our operating budget for these expenses, which include property cleanups.
- MLT received annual lease fees from the six occupied affordable homes on MLT parcels in Franklin. We continue to work with the Town of Franklin to reach a resolution to the status of the seventh affordable unit, which is in the hands of Bank of America.

After much consideration, we have changed the value of several large parcels we own to better reflect the reduction in value when property is placed under a permanent Conservation Restriction. As more of our land is placed under CRs to either municipal bodies, the Commonwealth or outside land trusts such as the Sudbury Valley Trustees, the "fair market value" of these parcels is drastically reduced. **You will notice that the value of our UNRESTRICTED land is \$109,100, and our PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED land is \$3,977,062 (total of \$4.086M) in the accompanying Statement of Financial Position. The Trust's total equity is \$4,292,023.**

Looking ahead, we have begun a special appeal to rebuild our Land Preservation Fund, which was depleted after three years of active land projects (see page 3).

The McCance Family Foundation has released \$5,000 for our 2022 operating budget and will match another \$5,000 if we obtain a grant to complete a new Strategic Plan.

Compared to one year ago, we have a much better balance between our unrestricted operating cash and our temporarily restricted special funds. While we always appreciate gifts which are given to be used "where needed most," we acknowledge that many donors have a special purpose in mind when you support our work. Whatever the reason you make a gift to the Land Trust, thank you for investing in the future of land conservation close to home.

Susan Speers, Treasurer **May 5, 2022**

## 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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## Conservation Report

Metacomet Land Trust (MLT) partnered with the Town of Upton and the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) to permanently protect four parcels owned by the Kelly Family on Upton's' Peppercorn Hill. Metacomet was awarded a \$56,500 Conservation Partnership grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2020 to partially fund purchase of one of the Kelly parcels. The grant, private donations, and a \$45,000 foundation grant obtained by SVT allowed MLT to purchase the parcel in 2021. The 23.8 acre property is named the Donald and Ann Kerr Memorial Preserve to honor their contribution to the preservation of the Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area in 1985. SVT and the Town of Upton hold a conservation restriction (CR) on the parcel. The other three Kelly parcels were purchased by the Town of Upton using Community Preservation Act funding.

In Sutton, MLT was deeded 19.5 acres preserved by the Stockwell Farms Open Space Development off Leland Hill and Dodge Hill Road. The property is adjacent to Sutton's Keown Orchards APR.

MLT worked with potential donors and partners on several promising land protection projects in Bellingham, Northbridge, Sutton, Mendon, and Douglas.



Metacomet Land Trust currently owns 613 acres of Conservation Land and holds 12 conservation restrictions on 352 acres. The Trust also monitors a CR 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 are located in Bellingham, Blackstone, Franklin, Mendon, Millville, Millbury, Northbridge, Norfolk, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge, and Wrentham.

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## Stewardship Report

Work continued on the Szerlag Farm Pollinator Field in Northbridge, which supports more than two dozen species of grasses and flowering plants. Elsewhere, a hardy group of volunteers cleaned up the meadow at Stevens Pond, filling a 20 cubic yard dumpster. Trails at the Lady Bug Preserve in Franklin were restored and signage added.



Russ Holden visited all of Metacomet Land Trust's 22 preserves and reported his keen observations of the fauna and flora on iNaturalist at <https://www.inaturalist.org/places/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=mlt&commit=Search>. Feel free to explore our properties and add your own observations! All Metacomet preserves are open to the public. Miles of wooded trails are present at Franklin Woods and at the Hop Brook (Blackstone), Stevens Pond, and Szerlag Farm preserves.

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 lands.

## 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. In 2021 the trust was donated a 4 drawer FireKing fire- and water-resistant file cabinet to store our records. By the end of 2021, approximately 14.2 GB of data were uploaded on the Trust's Google Drive Account. Much more sorting and scanning remains to be done

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