



**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed
Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Committee
Minutes**

December 18, 2018

7 pm to 9 pm

WPWA Campus, 203 Arcadia Road, Hope Valley, RI 02832

In attendance: Madeline Jeffery, Richard Seager, Fred Wagner, Tom McCormick, Dennis Migneault, Dave Prescott, Denise Poyer, Eric Thomas, Nils Wiberg, Peter Paton, Christopher Grube, Jon Ericson, Sean Henry, Virginia Wootten, Maureen Kennelly, Dick Diamond, Sarah Bursky, Kassi Archambault

Meeting called to order at 7:09 pm.

Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2018 meetings: Passed unanimously

Financial Report

1. Budget report
 - a. As of December 10, 2018 we have expended \$128,476.21 of the \$166,000 allotted funds. On Dec. 10, we have requested reimbursements of \$1,738.74.
 - b. Sean Henry approved 140 hours for Denise for the period from September 21, 2018 to November 29, 2018 for \$4,900.
 - c. To date for the project, Denise has worked a total of 2,331 hours, totaling \$81,585.

Old Business

1. Denise's replacement
 - a. Denise introduced Kassi Archambault, Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinator
2. Stewardship Plan hard copy disbursements
 - a. Denise and Kassi delivered to Voluntown and Sterling, CT.
 - b. Outstanding
 - i. North Kingstown will be delivered by Kassi and Denise on 12/19/18.
 - c. All other towns were delivered by town representatives.
 - d. Congressional delegates have received copies.
 - e. If additional copies need to be printed, then we will wait until officially designated.
3. Wild and Scenic bill progress
 - a. Hearing in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources took place on 12/12/18. Positive recommendations were made by the National Park Service. We are still waiting to see if the bill will pass this year. Otherwise, we are prepared to work with Congressional delegates to submit the bill again next year.

4. NPS Report progress
 - a. The Report is in formal review process. The report is being reviewed internally and with Washington, DC. Once approved, the report will have full draft, maps and appendices. Kassi and Elise will help Sara with layout. There will be a 90 day public comment period.
 - b. When finalized, the NPS Report will be available online and printing will likely take place from NPS through the PEPSI process.
5. Formation of the Stewardship Council
 - a. Progress on soliciting towns and agencies
 - i. On December 3rd, Denise and Kassi emailed each of the town councils, clerks or administrators with the request that the Study Committee had developed for appointing new representatives to the Stewardship Council.
 - ii. Send to state agencies, they act on formal requests. Eric is willing to help Kassi work on this.
 - b. Appointed committee members helping fill appointments and alternates
 - i. Members were asked to email Kassi with updates and suggestions.
 - c. Committee Members hoping to continue in the Stewardship Council was not discussed but was requested to include in the minutes:
 - i. Nils Wiberg – Charlestown
 - ii. Tom McCormick – Richmond
 - iii. Dennis Migneault – South Kingstown
 - iv. Fred Wagner – Stonington
 - v. Christopher Grube – West Greenwich
 - vi. Jon Ericson – Westerly
 - vii. Eric Thomas – CT DEEP
 - viii. Dave Prescott – Save the Bay
 - d. Timeline for first Council meeting
 - i. January 31st is the deadline for the towns to let us know who they are appointing, however this is a soft date. Kassi will follow up in February if she has not heard from the towns, to help them fill the position(s) as needed. The goal for the first Stewardship Council meeting is in April.
 - ii. First meeting(s) will consist of orientation, such as 1) how to effectively communicate with the general public about water, watersheds and the wild and scenic designation, 2) what is wild and scenic, what are the outstanding and remarkable values along these rivers 3) build relationships and understandings of fellow watershed towns 4) review chapters 6 and 7 of the Stewardship Plan 5) In small groups, discuss an Action Plan and associated goals
6. Prioritizing Stewardship Plan
 - a. Members expressed they weren't ready to prioritize projects as they felt it was out of their current responsibilities and was really something that the new council should take on. Instead they discussed the following themes as being important: education and outreach, environmental education in town schools for watershed benefit, identifying and pursuing partnerships, leveraging and supporting partnerships, watershed wide projects and some river by river projects, have high public benefit.
 - b. Some potential partners were discussed: land trusts, National Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Districts, National Water Quality Initiative
 - c. The Council may initially become engaged through exercises such as setting goals for the first year and setting a few longer term goals.

1. RI Department of Transportation letter to the Director
 - a. National Park Service will finalize the draft letter and send to the RIDOT.
 - b. Regular role of the Council is to bring forward information to NPS and communicate with towns and town officials to be abreast of town projects and plans. The goal is to find out about projects early in the process.
 - c. The Committee discussed the need and methods for the Council to stay informed about upcoming projects.
 - i. Maybe, establish a Committee tasked with drilling though town hall, public notices etc.
 - ii. Maybe come up with checklist or directions how to be aware of projects that may/will happen in or within a ¼ mile of rivers to be designated.
 - iii. A subcommittee may hold a semi-annual meeting with DOT. Best practice: do with breakfast and before 9am. Then subcommittee can bring information to full council.
 - iv. Find talent pool when seeking Council appointees. Relationships with DPWs and planners. Invite these people to Council or subcommittee meetings.
 - v. To research best practices of staying aware of current projects along designated rivers: See example of the 8 Mile River, other committees are named Site review or technical review, consider having a consultant to recommend how to build a process and/or provide training.
 - vi. This is especially important to prepare for ahead of time because of the size of the watershed, and because it spans two states.
2. Interim Chairperson
 - a. Jon Ericson was elected unanimously.
3. Approving hours for Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinator
 - a. Interim Chairperson will approve hours for the Coordinator. This was approved unanimously.

Schedule Next Meeting

1. Stewardship Council will form over the winter and have their first meeting in April or May 2019.

Adjourn at 8:45 pm

Action Items

Kassi

- Review and incorporate Committee suggestions in Project Priority/Action List
- Work with Jamie and Sara to finalize and send the letter to RI Department of Transportation Director
- Send committee the testimony by NPS to study committee, along with update of where bill stands.

Committee Members

- Inform if continuing to serve
- Forward suggestions for town appointees and alternates