

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



June 26, 2019, 6 pm to 8 pm

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

In Attendance: Charlestown: Neil Wardley; Exeter: Peter Lacouture, Nan Qunilan; Hopkinton: Michael Warner; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery, Richard Seager; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault; Stonington: Fred Wagner; West Greenwich: Chris Grube, Pat Lardner; Westerly: Jon Ericson, Harvey Perry; RI DEM: Cathy Sparks; NPS: Sarah Bursky; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott and speaker Kate McPherson; Council Coordinator: Kassi Archambault.

Meeting Called to Order at 6:07

Secretary's Report: Motion to Approve Minutes of May 22, 2019 Meeting: Fred; 2nd Dick. All in favor, none opposed.

Financial Report (15min)

1. Year to date:

- a. As of June 25, 2019 we have expended \$18,923 of the \$166,000 (Study Fund allocated in 2016) allotted funds with \$15,248 remaining.
- b. Kassi (12/2018-present and 3 weeks of Denise & Kassi working together) has worked a total of 532 hours, totaling \$18,603.

2. April 30 – June 25, 2019 Statement

Beginning Balance of \$22,281; Ending Balance of \$15,248; Deposits: NA; Expenses: \$7,033.

- a. Indirect Expenses: \$627
- b. Direct Expenses:
 - i. Project Coordinator Hours: \$5,075 (145 hrs approved by Jon Ericson)
 - ii. Other: 5/14 budget expenses included Website Developer/Maintenance \$194; Supplies \$76; NPS Study Report Design \$385.
 - iii. Other: 5/28 budget expense included NPS Study Design \$675.
- c. Monthly allocations were on target

3. Request for spending and/or reallocation of line items

- a. To approve \$100 spending from Budget Line Item: Website Developer. In the budget and under this line item, \$206 is remaining.
 - i. Kassi proposes to allow up to \$100 in expenditures for website updates. Including videos and menu options. This will better serve the Stewardship Council members and interested residents through access to key information, plus resources on history and terminology.

4. Discussion:

- a. Format of budget report is fine, this includes year to date, most recent statement and any request for spending/ reallocating line items. Supplying the actual budget was requested by many, and this will be supplied in future meetings. The Council also discussed and moved a motion: Coordinator may spend ≤ \$500 when it is allocated within a line item (WC) without seeking Council approval: Motion Fred; 2nd Dick. All in favor, none opposed.
- b. Approval of Financial Report. Motion to Approve the Financial Report: Dick; 2nd: Madeline. All in favor, none opposed.

Presentation (1 Hr)

1. Kate McPherson, Riverkeeper with Save the Bay, presented briefly on the changes to river buffer zones under proposed RI Freshwater Wetland Regulations. This was followed by questions and discussion.
 - a. The Council decided to do further research, apply the proposed regulations to areas in the watershed, and supply a comment letter. Writing the letter: Chris, Dennis, Jon and Kassi.
 - b. It was discussed to inform the towns, land trusts, Audubon Society of RI and The Nature Conservancy in case they wish to submit comments as well.
 - c. Concern was raised over unnamed streams, vernal pools and key tributaries.
 - d. It was requested to have CT DEEP present on wetland regulations.
2. Sarah of the NPS presented briefly on the Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968 and the Dingell Act of 2019, which includes the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers designation. This was followed by questions and discussion.
 - a. Announcement: Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) gathering September 15-17 in New Jersey. RSVP by end of July.
 - b. Key words: protect and enhance; free-flowing character; water quality; outstanding and remarkable values.
 - c. Section 7a – Federal projects require NPS to do federal review, US Army Corps may also offer review. This review is often done in collaboration with the local Stewardship Council.
 - d. Sec 1a
 - e. As a “Partnership” WSR, NPS does not come in with rangers and land acquisitions. Lands are owned and managed as they are now.
 - f. Enhancement projects other WSR groups have accomplished were shown. Examples: dam removal, public boating access improvements
 - g. Federally paid employees, such as NPS staff, or some of Kassi’s time, cannot be spent on lobbying. The Council can take this up, if desired or on special occasions.
 - h. Dingell Act was written watershed wide, tributaries are named, rivers are named.

Old Business (2 Min)

1. Review Document and Format of Charter Discussions; Full Group Discussions of Charter
 - a. Agenda item not discussed for a lack of time and moved to committee; see new business item #1.

New Business (35 Min)

1. Charter- next steps. Committee? Next Full Meeting?
 - a. The Council decided to have a committee work on the Charter next week, come up with a draft Charter before the next Council meeting. Sitting on the Committee: Pete L, Madeline, Fred, Dick, Jon, Kassi. Kassi will send resources and a doodle poll, to start the group off.
2. Consider Committee: Site Review Advisory Committee
 - a. The Council decided to have a committee work on Site or Project Review. A committee will choose their mission, criteria for projects to consider and more. Kassi will send resources and a doodle poll, to start the group off. Sitting on the Committee: Chris, Harvey, Dennis, Nan, Michael, Dave, and Kassi.
3. Members signed up to provide snacks at meetings July - April.
 - a. July – Fred, August – Dick, September – Jon, October – Pete A, November – Neil, December – Nan, January – Madeline, February – Kassi, March – Dennis, April – Pat.
4. Town Updates/Community Flash: Is there anything the towns are doing or interested in, that may be of interest to the Stewardship Council?
 - a. In interest of understanding a topic and it’s location, please submit a paragraph and the location (name, address or GPS coordinates) to Kassi and a Site/Project Review Committee Chairperson. When necessary, these community/town topics can be explored further.
 - b. West Greenwich Reps, Pat and Chris, spoke of a land acquisition project CT DEEP is doing in Voluntown, CT and the Town of WG is exploring just over the border.

- c. Hopkinton Rep, Mike, discussed solar panel installations. There is a GIS map designed to appropriately site installations, and to list existing passed/proposed and denied installations. The map is designed for Hopkinton and can be used as a model for elsewhere.

Action Items

1. Kassi, and/or a Charter Committee, will report back to council on the charter activities before next meeting. Members comment on report.
2. Members reach out to respective appointed body (town, agency or non-profit) to see what projects are pending or just started; and to identify other needs they have or where additional collaborations are needed. (Not discussed, likely an outcome of Project Review Committee.)
3. Other Actions from Old Business
 - a. Kassi will send resources and a doodle poll to each group: Advisory Letter on Wetland Regs, Charter Committee, Site/Project Review Committee
 - b. Committees will meet and come up with drafts to present to full Council next meeting.

Around the Table in Five- each member announces their last thoughts.

Next Meeting: Fourth Wednesday of each month at 6pm at WPWA. Date is July 24, 2019.

Adjourned at 8: 07