



## **Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council Minutes**

*July 24, 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, Elaine Caldarone; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery; Richmond: Pete August, Tom McCormick; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault; Sterling: Roger Gibson; Stonington: Fred Wagner, Brian Bottaro; West Greenwich: Chris Grube, Pat Lardner; Westerly: Harvey Perry; RI DEM: Cathy Sparks; CT DEEP: Eric Thomas; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; WPWA: Joe MacAndrew; Council Coordinator: Kassi Archambault.

Meeting Called to Order at 6:02 pm

Presentation (30 Min)

1. Erik Mas, Principal Engineer of Fuss & O'Neil, presented then answered questions on the 2017 Wood-Pawcatuck Flood Resiliency and Management Plan, Plan available

here: [http://wpwa.org/flood\\_resiliency.html](http://wpwa.org/flood_resiliency.html)

- Plan entailed stakeholder and community involvement. Resiliency means using solid engineering and smart planning to bounce back after a severe weather event. Plan addresses vulnerable infrastructure. Strategies were based on green infrastructure, aka nature based solutions, ones that addressed habitat and water quality as well as water flow.
- Each town has a two page hand out. This is best place to start your research, then use a key idea from the two-pager to do further research in the Plan itself. The Plan has extensive Data and Analysis, plus site specific projects.
- Projects focused on in presentation were related to dams, culverts and stormwater.
- Examples of green infrastructure are at University of Connecticut Campus, University of Rhode Island Campus and others. Eric Thomas and Kassi Archambault can help connect you with tours.
- Additional resources include RI DOT Roadway Crossings Handbook, RI DEM Stormwater Manual.

Secretary's Report: Approval of Minutes of June 26, 2019 meeting Motion to Accept: Fred; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Michael. Abstain: Eric. All in favor, none opposed.

### Financial Report (5 Min)

#### 1. Year to Date:

- As of July 25, 2019 we have expended \$22,856 of the \$166,000 (Study Fund allocated in 2016) allotted funds with \$11,315 remaining.
- Kassi (12/2018-present and 3 weeks of Denise & Kassi working together) has worked a total of 631.5 hours, totaling \$21,527.

#### 2. June 26 – July 23, 2019 Statement

- Beginning Balance of \$15,248; Ending Balance of \$11,315; Deposits: NA; Expenses: \$3,933.
- Indirect Expenses: \$350
- Direct Expenses:
  - Project Coordinator Hours: \$2,924 (99.5 hrs approved by Jon Ericson)
  - Other: 7/09 budget expenses included NPS Report Design \$60.
  - Other: 7/23 budget expense included Mileage \$40.
- Monthly allocations were on target
- Motion to Accept Financial Report: Fred; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Pete A. All in favor, none opposed.

### Old Business (40 Min)

- Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Gathering September 15-17 in New Jersey. Email Kassi by Friday 7/27 if you are able to join this opportunity.
- RI DEM Freshwater Wetland Buffer Zones Regulations
  - Letter has been drafted. Letter content includes background on WP WSR and WSR generally, consideration of ORVs especially habitat fragmentation, loss of buffers, rare species and diversity, request to included tributaries named in the WSR Act, excerpts from Stewardship Plan chapter on Action Strategies, concerns regarding Appendix 14.00 Municipal Petition Process.
  - DEM staff have been emailed.
  - In the future, the Stewardship Council may notify towns, although they may have heard through the League of Cities and Towns.
  - Public Comment Period has not begun yet.
- Committee updates. Committee Chairs share committee name, mission and timeline or status of activities. Brief Discussion.
  - By-Laws Committee – Jon is committee Chair. Pete L reported the group met twice, extensively, and is 2/3 through drafting the By-Laws. The next meeting is 7/29. The goal is to provide a clean draft for Stewardship Council review prior to the August meeting.
  - Natural Resource Stewardship Committee – Harvey stated the group met twice, the mission generally is to review proposals and other actions to determine whether they appropriately address the long term protection and enhancement of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed. The next meeting is scheduled for 8/12.

- Request and discussion regarded Town Representatives growing a relationship with Town officials, using the internet to access agendas and minutes.
- A letter to Town Board of Selectmen or Town Council was discussed. Purpose will be at least for the Stewardship Council Town Representatives to introduce themselves, request to be placed on lists as to receive projects/agendas/meeting minutes. The Town Representatives may then review materials for any projects that may positively or negatively have an impact on the watershed. This committee will review this letter before making it available to the full Stewardship Council.
- Goals – review secretary of state and town websites to request being sent official town agendas and related materials; consider creating a community list to communicate with/announce to a large group, establish ourselves with town officials so they know to reach out to the WSR Stewardship Council.

#### New Business (15 Min)

- Consider Committees: Education and Outreach Committee, Stewardship Projects Committee. Describe general mission and timeline.
  - Education and Outreach Committee – actions this committee may take include produce materials, strategize on how to make the approximately 150-200,000 residents in all of the Stewardship Council represented towns are aware of the WP WSRs, run events/programs/classes, support other committees, have public and community relations component. First project will be to design river crossing signs that label the river names and the WSR designation for RI roads within 2-3 weeks. RI DOT has agreed to print these signs. RI DEM Director would like to see the designs by mid-August. Stewardship Council members who volunteered for this committee include Pete A, Nan, Dave and Elaine.
  - Stewardship Projects Committee – actions this committee will take is to spearhead positive impact projects that earn public attention. Currently, with limited budget these projects may be small, with a future of larger projects and seeking funding for them. Stewardship Council members who volunteered for this committee include Neil, Harvey, Eric, Cathy and Joe.
- Town Updates/Community Flash: Is there anything the towns are doing or interested in, that may be of interest to the Stewardship Council?
  - Format in Future – email location, summary and resources, timeline and contact person(s) to Kassi and to Natural Resource Stewardship Committee Chair Harvey, [harveyperry2@gmail.com](mailto:harveyperry2@gmail.com)
  - West Greenwich Representatives reported the land acquisition along Hazard Pond is being researched due to problem involving taxes. Also that Falls River Road will be abandoned by the town and given up to RI DEM for a hiking trail. Cathy, RI DEM, stated she did not know of this.
  - Westerly, 169 Main St, has a proposal for a restaurant with river access on the Pawcatuck R.

- Richmond, 477 Church St and 36 Woodville Road have two separate solar proposals. They will be reviewed at Zoning Board of Review on Aug 26.
- Richmond, 172 Beaver River Road solar proposal will be presented Aug 13<sup>th</sup> at the Planning Board Meeting. The Stewardship Council has provided a comment letter. The Zoning Board of Review anticipates reviewing the Planning Board's recommendation on September 23.
- Westerly, Stonington and North Stonington are proposing a kayak trail and Stillman Avenue Dam removal. They have provided the Stewardship Council a letter and are seeking federal funds and support.

Action Items

- Other Actions from New Business

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

Next Meeting: Fourth Wednesday of each month at 6pm at WPWA. Date is August 28, 2019.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:01 Motion to Accept: Michael; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Tom. All in favor, none opposed.