



Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council Minutes

September 25, 2019, 6 pm to 8 pm

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

In Attendance: Exeter: Peter Lacouture; Hopkinton: Elaine Caldarone; North Kingstown: Ahren Cohen; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery; Richmond: Pete August; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault; Sterling: Roger Gibson; Stonington: Fred Wagner; West Greenwich: Pat Lardner; Westerly: Harvey Perry, Jon Ericson; RI DEM: Michelle Sheehan; CT DEEP: Eric Thomas; National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh; WPWA: Joe MacAndrew; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; Council Coordinator: Kassi Archambault.

Meeting Called to Order at 6:01pm

Secretary's Report: Approval of Minutes of August 28, 2019 meeting Motion to Accept: Fred; 2nd: Dennis. All in favor, none opposed.

Financial Report (5 Min)

1. Year to Date:
 - a. Kassi (12/2018-present and 3 weeks of Denise & Kassi working together) has worked a total of 811 hours, totaling \$27,828.
2. August 21 – September 19, 2019 Statement
 - a. This statement cannot accurately be reported because the WPWA Accountant and the WSR Coordinator have not met.
 - b. NPS authorized all funds allocated in the Cooperative Agreement to be drawn down.
 - c. Receipts were collected for the 8/28/2019 Council approved expenditures. By the last day of September, all funds will have been spent.
 - d. The Council goal of spending down to zero has been met.
3. Request for spending and/or reallocation of line items
 - a. The \$30,000 WPWA was granted from the RI Foundation for the WSR Coordinator can be reflected in the next budget. The budget would then reflect

grant income. Then, the Chair and Council may continue to review Coordinator Hours and a Financial Report.

4. Within 90 Days of October 1st, Kassi will submit a final Federal Financial Report to NPS.

Presentation (50 Min)

1. Interim Chair Jon Ericson provided a high level overview of the Council and what we are currently working on as we go forward. The intent is to reflect on what we've accomplished so far and tee up some topics for discussion as needed.

Accomplishments

- a. Have bylaws
- b. Have officers and nominations
- c. Have a fiscal agent
- d. Have members of the council
- e. Have Committees (bylaws, natural resources, stewardship projects, info and education, other?)

Forthcoming Work

- a. Nominations for officers and voting next month
- b. Hopefully funding for next year, will renew coop agreement
- c. What additional non-profit members on council?
- d. Identify chairs for committees
- e. Procedures to make sure everyone is included
- f. Need to take minutes for committee meetings. Need to figure out how.
- g. Question – should we publish committee minutes on web site. Not required to do so. Some committees might discuss projects issues that might not be well-served to post on the web. Kassi will make minutes available to Council. Means of doing so TBA. Will NOT post committee minutes on web site
- h. Strive for transparency of committee's work
- i. Reach out to others to participate in the work of the W&S Council

What are Committees Doing?

- a. Jon briefly reviewed the current or completed work of the various committees.
2. Kassi provided a brief update on the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Gathering, to be followed up in October meeting.
 - a. Kassi and Jon were able to network with peers
 - b. Most have a strong relationship with watershed organization
 - c. Interesting projects Kassi learned about – mapping paddle routes and recording oral histories.
 - d. Indemnification discussed at meeting and some good ideas emerged. Will present more next month.

Old Business (45 Min)

1. Town Hall introductions
 - a. West Greenwich - Pat and Chris Grube had a meeting with town manager who was interested in activities. They have a very nice relationship with town officials.
 - b. South Kingstown - Dennis met with Town Council and met Council and administrator. Bill McCusker was recently appointed as alternate SK rep. Bill knows many of the Town staff.
 - c. Stonington - Fred met first selectman a few months ago. Agreed to details of letter, web site will include mention of Council.
 - d. Richmond – Tom and Pete August in contact with Town Planner, Land Trust and Conservation Commission.
 - e. Westerly – Harvey and Jon met with new Town Planner. Set up a quarterly meeting to touch base. Talked about Town Ordinances and the possibility of adding a trigger for proposals within ¼ mile of the Pawcatuck River that would alert the applicant to the need of addressing the potential impact of approving their proposal to the protection and preservation of the outstanding remarkable values of the Pawcatuck River. It would also alert the Council of such actions before the town boards.
 - f. Sterling – Roger felt intro letter was well done. Sent to First Selectman and relevant commissions, and Town Council today. Roger sees First Selectman monthly at other town meetings.
 - g. Hopkinton – Elaine and Mike Warner sent out letter. Very positive response. CC'ed Boards and Commissions. Contact information for the Council will be on the Town website.
 - h. North Kingstown – Ahren has recruited an applicant for alternate. This is on October 7th Town Council meeting. Ahren also on conversation commission and groundwater commission. Representatives from the Town Planning Department and Town Council sit on both commissions. Means Stewardship council well poised to track issues.
 - i. North Stonington - Dick Seager and Madeline know town officials very well. Met with First Selectman and will meet quarterly to update. Have a good relationship with the Town.
2. Committee Chair Reports
 - a. Bylaws – Jon Ericson. Reviewed Conflict of Interest policy. Pete L reviewed some tricky issues (and answers) on conflict of interest situations. Vigorous discussion followed. Need to understand the line where participation in an issue can be viewed as a conflict of interest, then avoid the line! Key question is does the relationship influence his/her judgment on an issue. Goal, protect the interest of the Stewardship Council. Suggestion -- Article 4 is done annually for each member of the Council. Kassi made editorial change to policy. Motion to accept policy with modification: Fred; 2nd Pete L. All in favor, none opposed.
 - b. Stewardship Projects CT – Joe MacAndrew. Develop a process to review non-funded projects. Council receives request to review and send to committee who reviews the project. Full Council makes a decision on the projects. Next, the

- committee will work on funded projects. For example, the “kayak trail”, 3 towns, committee felt it best to parse out projects into pieces for review. Kassi drafted a letter to Town manager to let Mr. Rooney acknowledging request to review and is studying the issue. Motion to send letter to Westerly Town Manager: Fred; 2nd Pat. All in favor, none opposed.
- c. Natural Resources Stewardship – Kassi reported. Reviewed RIDEM freshwater regulations and Beaver River solar panel.
 - d. Information and Education – Kassi reported. Have been reviewing sign designs and web site overhaul.

New Business (15 Min)

1. Officer Nominations:
 - a. Jon Ericson to serve as Chair
Dave Prescott as Vice-Chair
Pete August as Secretary
 - b. Motion to fill Secretary role and have Coordinator serve as Treasurer: Dave; 2nd: Madeline. All in favor, none opposed.
 - c. Nominations accepted presently through the October meeting, email Kassi@wpwa.org
2. Town / community updates. Covered in Town Hall Introductions.
3. Good of the Order – Open discussion on other topics of interest.
 - a. Dennis explains challenging canoeing circumstance in Great Swamp. Safety concerns. Should Stewardship Council monitor tree downs and do clearing? NH Wild and Scenic had a great discussion of the topic and learn from NH experience. Should we address safety issues? Complicated by DEM regulations - might not permit clearing path to water.
 - b. Michelle Sheehan from DEM (Sparks alternate). Open Space grants now open. Outdoor Recreation program. Will send out link to grant descriptions.
 - c. Kassi describes green infrastructure grant opportunity: Section 319 funds from RIDEM. Polled group for any towns that might be interested. Eric Thomas, CT DEEP mentioned he will pursue having similar funds available to CT towns.
4. November meeting to be 3rd Wednesday, November 20, 6-8 pm. No December meeting. October 23 meeting still on the books.

Around the Table in Five. Many positive and thoughtful comments.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 PM, Motion: Eric; 2nd: Roger. All in favor, none opposed.