



Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council Minutes

***October 23, 2019, 6 pm to 8 pm
WPWA Campus, 203 Arcadia Road, Hope Valley, RI 02832***

In Attendance: Exeter: Peter Lacouture and Nan Quinlan; Hopkinton: Elaine Caldarone and Mike Warner; North Kingstown: guest and likely appointed alternate Jim Leblanc; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery and Dick Seager; Richmond: Pete August and Tom McCormick; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault and Bill McCusker; Sterling: Roger Gibson; Stonington: Fred Wagner; West Greenwich: Chris Grube and Pat Lardner; Westerly: Harvey Perry, Jon Ericson; RI DEM: Cathy Sparks; National Park Service: Sarah Bursky; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; Council Coordinator: Kassi Archambault.

Meeting Called to Order at 6:03pm

Secretary's Report: Approval of Minutes of September 25, 2019 meeting
Motion to Accept: Fred; 2nd: Dennis. All in favor, none opposed.

Financial Report (5 Min)

1. Year to Date:

- a. As of September 19, 2019 we have expended \$166,000 of the \$166,000 (Study Fund allocated in 2016) allotted funds with zero remaining. This is reflected in the budget dated 9/30/19.
- b. Kassi (12/2018-present and 3 weeks of Denise & Kassi working together) has worked a total of 854 hours, totaling \$29,333.

2. August 21 – September 19, 2019 Statement

- a. Beginning Balance of \$8,337; Ending Balance of zero; Expenses: \$8,337
- b. Indirect Expenses: \$852.72
- c. Direct Expenses:
 - i. Project Coordinator Hours 8/9/19 - 9/19/19: \$5,075 (145 hrs approved by Jon Ericson)
 - ii. Outreach: Reimbursed WPWA for video updates and services at WSR Celebration April 8: \$1,250; Website updates: \$100

- iii. Planning: GIS mapping for town planner and for Freshwater Wetland Regulations Comment: \$484
- iv. Miscellaneous: Mileage for Resiliency workshop and event site scouting: \$41.30; attended workshop PWSR Gathering \$534.22
- d. Monthly allocations were on target. The Council goal of spending down to zero was met on September 19, 2019.
- e. Spreadsheet budgets since 8/20/19 need to be supplied to the Council.

3. New Budget

- a. On October 16, Kassi submitted a final Federal Financial Report to NPS.
- b. Kassi will supply a budget to reflect the \$30,000 WPWA was granted from the RI Foundation (RIF) for the WSR Coordinator salary. Purposes: the Chair and Council may continue to review Coordinator Hours and a Financial Report; additional funds received may continue to be tracked; to be aware if additional funds are needed

4. Motion to Accept Financial Report: Fred; 2nd: Roger. All in favor, none opposed.

Presentation (25 Min)

1. Coordinator Kassi Archambault and Interim Chair Jon Ericson presented on the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Gathering.

- a. Only three PWSRs in nation (Wekiva, Wood-Pawcatuck, Westfield) have a “wild” designation, meaning little to no human impact on those river miles. (rivers.gov)
- b. Search online for “PWSR Toolkit” to get to toolkit. Focus on “Designation” page.
- c. Many similarities and differences among Councils.
 - i. Many partner with a watershed organization
 - ii. A lot of variation in how Councils organize themselves
- d. Indemnification.
 - i. Are we indemnified? Jon researched. We are not a 501(c)3 so cannot buy insurance. Appointing organization might cover individual member, might not cover as an officer. Chairs and Officers take on responsibilities beyond representing appointing town. Example: Westerly will cover Jon as a member, but not cover him as an officer.
 - ii. WPWA will get D&O insurance (from Lathrop) for Council. In future, NPS may include this in our Cooperative Agreement. All members of the Council would be covered (as Directors).
 - iii. Motion to accept WPWA payment for Directors and Officers insurance: Dennis; 2nd: Fred. All in favor, none opposed.
- e. Other projects – paddling maps (don’t overlap with explore RI Blueways map guides), oral histories

Old Business (1 Hr 5 Min)

- 1. Council Interim Chair completed task: Sent thank you letter to the Rhode Island Foundation for awarding grant to WPWA for Coordinator salary.
- 2. Update on discussions with reps from towns. Agency / Non Profit relevant updates. (15 min)
 - a. Westerly – Harvey and Jon met with planner and will meet on a monthly basis.

- b. Stonington – Fred sent letter to First Selectman. Officials are on board with keeping WSR up to speed.
 - c. North Stonington – Madeline and Dick met with First Selectman and Conservation Commission Chair. CT Deep Eric Thomas provided a lot to the conversation. Good meeting. Clarified position with a number of issues. Will meet on a quarterly basis.
 - d. South Kingstown – Dennis and Bill met with Planner and Assist Planner, and Chair of Conservation Commission. Good meeting. Have been asked to comment on comprehensive plan.
 - e. Exeter – Pete reported he and Nan have not met with town officials yet, and will meet the Council and Planner before next month’s meeting.
3. Comparing and contrasting committees (10 m)
- a. Each committee is developing skills, processes and mandate needed of that committee. One committee will pass a project or task to another committee if it feels another committee is more relevant. The Council will make Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) available for on-boarding new members and clarity. Use FAQs web page when SOP isn’t applicable.
 - b. Example, if Advisory Committee receives a proposal to review and they endorse it, they will submit this endorsement letter to the Council for review and sending. Endorsed proposal(s) will be submitted to the Project Committee for assessment of whether or not the Council can provide funds and/or volunteers.
4. Committee Chair updates.
- a. Bylaws Committee Chair Jon Ericson provided 9/25/2019 approved policy on Conflict of Interest to the Council and collected signed documents. (10 min)
 - b. Stewardship Projects Committee. (5 min)
 - i. Kassi reports. Need a new Chair. Revised mission statement in contrast to Advisory Committee. Drafting criteria to prioritize projects. Will offer draft in November or January meeting.
 - c. Natural Resource Stewardship Committee updates. (5 min)
 - i. Mike Warner reports that the newly named Stewardship Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). In lieu of a chair, Mike will lead meetings and provide Council updates. In last ten minutes of meeting, committee will write minutes and draft next agenda topics. Will meet every 4th Tuesday of the month in the afternoon. (Members: Nan, Mike, Fred, Chris, Pat and Dave.)
 - ii. Met for two hours yesterday. Finalizing mission statement. Working on a proposal review process for Council to approve. Will present final draft to Council in January. Will track all proposals underway. Will work on SOPs.
 - d. Information and Education Committee (5 min)
 - i. Kassi updates. Two projects – sign design and web site makeover. DOT has started to provide guidance. Size will be road dependent. Many comments by Council. Dick advocates for a common branding. Dennis is Chair.
 - ii. Web site changes underway.
5. Officer Nominations, Discussions and Elections (10 m)
- a. Vote on slate of officers – Jon Chair, Dave Vice-Chair, Pete A Sec.

- b. Nominations from the floor were opened. No nominations made. Motion to Close Nominations: Peter L; 2nd: Cathy.
- c. Motion to Approve the Slate of Officers: Pete L; 2nd: Cathy. All in favor, none opposed.

New Business (30 Min)

1. Introduction of Next Step: Prioritizing Projects from Stewardship Plan Ch 6, Action Strategies for the Future (15 min)
 - a. Council input – how to prioritize projects
 - i. Council members should do some reading. Materials will be provided by email, as will this slideshow listing materials.
 - ii. Draft and approve criteria (underway by Project Committee)
 - iii. Projects aka Action Strategies can take many forms.
 - b. Council preferences
 - i. Group size 5-8 or 20-30 people
 - a. Break up into 2-3 groups to come up with list then coalesce with whole group?
 - b. Larger group better for spawning new ideas.
 - c. Need a facilitator to moderate discussions.
 - d. Survey Council for top ideas to seed conversation. Survey and ask to rank projects. Kassi will make survey.
 - e. When would strategic planning event happen?
 - ii. How to focus
 - iii. How align topics
 - iv. After projects prioritized, then what
 - a. Funding: \$105K annual funding to Council from NPS
 - v. What is timeline we are planning for? Short-term, long-term? With or without budget.
 - vi. Flow – Survey, two groups to review, focus on ORVs, and coalesce groups.
 - vii. Use regular scheduled meeting and add an hour for discussion of priority
 - viii. Kassi will use this discussion to inform the format.
2. Town Updates/Community Flash: Is there anything the towns are doing or interested in, that may be of interest to the Stewardship Council?
 - a. Roger took a class with Army Corps and CT DEEP. Funds available for water quality projects in CT on a watershed basis through Connecticut In-Lieu Fee Program.
3. Good of the Order – Open discussion on other topics of interest.
 - a. South County Tourism Council wants to feature W&S in visitors guide. Stewardship Council agreed this is a good idea.
 - b. Are tributaries covered within ¼ mile? Named yes. Un-named tribs fall into a gray zone.
 - c. Is “watershed” in or not in the name of the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic? Determined it was not included by the Study Committee, as seen on the title of the Plan. The Plan and Act, however are written in watershed approach.
 - d. Partnership – Not well know that WSR program includes a smaller program

called Partnership WSR. We don't need to anchor on it. The Study Committee did not.

Action Items

1. Introduce yourself to a town group, such as the municipal/local land trust(s). You may use the Introduction to Town letter. You may contact them and ask to be added to the agenda or simply visit an upcoming meeting.
2. Monthly or when applicable, email Kassi potential agenda topics, including relevant town/community updates.

Next Meeting: November 20th, 3rd Wednesday, 6-8 pm. November meeting moved from 4th week due to Holiday. December there is no meeting. Enjoy winter break!

Meeting Adjourned at 8:01 PM, Motion: Dennis; 2nd: Cathy. All in favor, none opposed.