

**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed**  
**Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council**  
**Minutes**  
*July 22, 2020, 6 pm to 8 pm*

In Attendance: Exeter: Nan Quinlan, Kevin McGovern; Hopkinton: Elaine Caldarone; North Kingstown: Ahren L Cohen; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery, Dick Seager; Richmond: Antonia Bryson, Pete August; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault, Bill McCusker; Stonington: Brian Bottaro; West Greenwich: Chris Grube; Westerly: Jon Ericson; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association: Brett Still; National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh; CT DEEP Eric Thomas; Council Coordinator: Kassi Archambault.

Called to Order: 6:03 PM

Jon reviewed the attached documents to the minutes and briefed us on the plan to deliberate tonight and can vote in a future meeting on certain issues. Wants to maximize the amount of time people can think about issues. Jon revised the Agenda, he moved NPS Cooperative Agreement to Financial Report and added Good of the Order.

Secretary's Report: Approval of Revised 7/6/20 Minutes of June 24, 2020 meeting  
Dennis moves approval, Dave seconds, no questions, motion passed.

Financial Report: Approval of the Monthly Financial Report

1. NPS cooperative agreement was made official 7/9/2020. Amount is \$150,000, can have 5 years to spend down.
2. Kassi requests approval to spend \$234.00 for website maintenance, \$323.75 for Coordinator Time (Direct Cost sum is \$557.75), and \$55.78 for Indirect Cost, which is a sum of \$613.53. Ahren asks about larger budget and if it is still a good guide. Kassi is happy with it, no changes or concerns. Ahren moves the motion to accept the Financial Report and spending approval, second by Dave, motion passes.

Old Business (80 Min)

1. Committee Reports (10 min)
  - a. Information and Education
    - i. Bill described the new sign on bike path on Chipuxet river crossing in SK. Looks beautiful.
    - ii. Bill mentions will take Town Council President Abel Collins on paddle down Chipuxet to Wordens Pond. Will do the same with Parks Director and Conservation Chair in the future Chipuxet paddles.
    - iii. Have been working hard on making signs (~15 signs) for DEM put-ins and a narrative proposal to DEM review (Cathy Sparks)
    - iv. Will expand to other put-ins after we finish DEM launch sites
    - v. We should expand the idea of including ponds and lakes into domain of Wild & Scenic paddling opportunities. Madeline will provide a list of CT ponds
    - vi. Getting great traction on a paddle on August 19 (3:30-8:00). 25 people. Kassi will provide the Council with a sign up. Pulled Pork sandwiches will be served.
  - b. Executive – Update on planning for Kassi's leave of absence. Update on WPWA and W&S.
    - i. Jon reviews the plan for when Kassi is offline having her baby.
      1. Motion required to assign Pete as acting treasurer. Made by Dennis, second by Ahren, motion approved.
      2. Looking for volunteers to chair committees
      3. Jon will develop and distribute agendas, liaison with NPS and start budget process
      4. Pete will cover DropBox management

5. A representative per committee will be allowed to schedule Zoom meetings.
6. Kassi will continue to develop plans for other duties to be fulfilled while she is offline
- ii. Alan Desbonnet will join us in August meeting to discuss projects, expectations, and conversation. After meeting with Alan we can develop a plan going forward
  1. Ahren asks about WPWA strategic plan to serve as a template? Brett reports that they have a plan and he will see if WPWA can share with the Council.
- iii. Exec committee will be posting agendas and meeting times 5 days prior to meetings. If anyone wants to participate, they can. If guests have topics or questions, we will do those at the beginning of the meeting. Guests will be able to comment on agenda items.

## 2. Committee Presentations (70 min)

### a. Advisory –Two Advisory Statements

- i. Entertain Motion to Send Advisory Letter: Preservation of URI W. Alton Jones Campus (2,300 acres in West Greenwich; undergoing management change)
  1. Kassi reviewed the letter to URI on the future of Alton Jones Campus. West Greenwich Town Representatives helped research and write the letter, which was submitted to the Advisory Committee for review.
  2. Motion to approve letter by Madeline, second by Ahren. Ahren asked about titling the letter. Dennis suggests a different configuration on signatures (add Jon as Chair). Madeline asks that we use Wild and Scenic logo. It is on the letterhead. Bill asks who the letter comes from. We need to add Jon to the signers of official communications. Eric likes the letter, questions – who is the new management entity? Answer: Smaller staff at the Campus. URI is making plans for the future. Antonia asks what is the management change? Antonia comment – who do we address letter to? Other NGO’s addressed letter to President Dooley and asked for a future meeting. Kassi received a copy of the other letters. Letter will be addressed to Dooley and State Properties Committee. CC: to Board of State Properties Committee. Answer to management questions: Brett reports that there is no management plan for the forest. He and others on campus are hoping to develop a management plan. URI is state land grant university and is obliged manage by example. Eric suggest we not address land grant status in letter but ask to be at the table for future meetings. Motion approved.
- ii. Discussion and Entertain Post-meeting Follow-up Approval of Sending Advisory Letter: General letter to Hopkinton advising strong buffers along waterways and preservation of contiguous forests when considering siting large alternative energy installations.
  1. Kassi reviewed development of the letter. Look out for the letter and vote later, via email. Discussion now. Dennis says it’s hard to discuss the item without a draft letter. Antonia comments it is not about a specific project but a broad letter reaffirming principles. Madeline asks who will sign. Will include Jon. Letter will go to full Town Council and planning staff and board. Eric asks if there is a land use attorney representing the town. Elaine says she does not know. Hopkinton has had 33 proposals for town solar. Many law suits. A draft letter will be forthcoming.

### b. Bylaws –

- i. Discussion and entertain motion to adopt Communications Policy.
- ii. Jon overviews Communications Policy with PowerPoint slides.
- iii. Dennis moves to accept communications policy with revision (to add back communicating official opinions in circumstances of request by reporter). Antonia seconds. Eric says he has to abstain as a state representative. Motion approved
- iv. Bylaw Revisions: Will start discussion tonight and vote by ballot electronically after discussion complete, likely during August meeting. Dennis suggests that item 6 (Exec Comm) and move that to last. In the spirit of time, will move that to next month. Antonia makes the comment that bylaws are operating procedures and constraints. Maybe a policy

on personal conduct goes into a policy not by-laws. Dennis points to #8 and Chair must act expeditiously. Madeline thinks it should go into a policy statement not by-laws. Ahren asks if we can swap “conduct” with “guidelines for membership.”

- v. Dennis mentions need to write job description for staff.
  - vi. Kevin asks if there should be a special meeting on bylaws. Maybe we can schedule more time to discuss at a future meeting. Group favors to extend meeting in August for additional discussion.
- c. Projects –
- i. High level report on Recommendations aka Strategic Plan.
    1. Kassi reviewed need by Projects Committee to package projects in the form of a strategic plan (1 and 3 year time horizon). Dennis mentions that a strategic planning process can be very helpful. Is an important, and wide-open discussion. It should be a full council activity. Dennis suggests the council discusses how we go about a strategic plan. Antonia mentions we have a stewardship plan, why do we need a strategic plan? We have our tasks but need to put in a reasonable time-line. Jamie mentions value in setting priorities but also acknowledges we have done much of this already. Pete comments we aren’t really developing a strategic plan, but a workplan to prioritize items in the stewardship plan. Ahren – we don’t need a facilitator. Needs Council buy-in and implementation. Doing the work of the council needs a road map and guideline.
  - ii. Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> Wild and Scenic Event! Public Invited...Paddling Tour on cultural and historical values.
    1. Kassi quickly reviewed

#### New Business (15 Min)

1. Update on NPS Cooperative Agreement
  - a. Funds in place
2. Consider Line Item Approval of the following from the Council Budget approved 2/26 for NPS
  - a. Reconsider funding amount for WPWA River Trail Maintenance – Dennis and Bill
    - i. Dennis discusses meeting with Chris Fox on river clearing. Dennis expressed wish to help the clearing program. Proposes to authorize \$700 to WPWA to buy a chainsaw and chains (equipment) to support river clearing. We have \$5,000 budgeted for clearing and \$1,500 approved to date. Bill expressed support for the idea. Pete moves approval, Ahren seconds, motion passes.
  - b. Events for \$8,000
  - c. GIS & Mapping Services for \$4,092
    - i. Motion to approve full budgeted amounts for line items Events and GIS & Mapping Services by Chris, Elaine seconds. Kassi explains both expenses – the public paddle on Jay Cronin on Pawcatuck is the first event. Jaime asks why we are appropriating all \$8,000, not what is required for each event.
    - ii. GIS services is to make planning maps for town(s), starting with Hopkinton.
    - iii. After spirited discussion it appeared the Council was comfortable with approving project-specific expenses but not the whole budget line. Vote on the original motion to approve the full amounts, motion denied.
    - iv. Dave makes motion to approve \$1,000 for each of the two expenses, Ahren seconds, motion passes.

#### Good of the Order

1. Bill reviews meeting with WPWA water quality committee.
2. In August Bill will do a source to the sea paddle (Pawcatuck to Napatree). Follow in Facebook. Already have many followers.

Motion to Adjourn at 8:09 by Chris, Dave seconds, motion passes.

