

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council

Minutes

Meeting Held on April 28, 2021

In Attendance: Charlestown: Neil Wardley, Bob Maietta; Exeter: Nan Quinlan; Hopkinton: Elaine Caldarone, Chip Heil; Richmond: Antonia Bryson, Pete August; South Kingstown: Dennis Migneault, Bill McCusker; Stonington: Fred Wagner, Sara Baker; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery, Dick Seager; West Greenwich: Chris Grube, Pat Lardner; CT DEEP: Eric Thomas; RI DEM: Tee Jay Boudreau; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh, Lauren Bonatakis; WPWA: Brett Still; Kassi Donnelly, Coordinator.

A quorum having been met, and in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, D. Prescott, called the meeting to order at 5 pm.

D. Prescott opened the meeting by noting the Council has gained a newly appointed alternate member from Charlestown, Bob Maietta. N. Wardley introduced Bob, who provided his own short introduction. D. Prescott then asked individual Council members to introduce themselves to the new member.

Secretary's Report: A. Bryson presented the draft minutes of the March 24, 2021 meeting. There being no discussion, P. August moved the approval and F. Wagner seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Report: P. August presented the monthly financial report, noting a slightly expanded format which had been prepared by the bookkeeper. There being no discussion, F. Wagner moved to approve the report, D. Migneault seconded, and the motion passed.

Committee Reports

1. Bylaws:

B. Still reported that the Board of WPWA approved the revised MOU at its meeting the previous week. D. Prescott stated that the Council would schedule the item for approval on the May meeting agenda.

2. Executive:

Insurance Update: D. Prescott reported that the Council has formed a small subcommittee to develop risk mitigation measures for expected Council activities. The subcommittee will be meeting in the coming weeks. A. Bryson reported on the insurance meeting with WPWA and the genesis of the new subcommittee. It is anticipated that WPWA will provide coverage under existing policies once risk mitigation measures are agreed upon.

Potter Hill Dam Workshop: D. Prescott reported that a workshop has been scheduled for Council members on May 6 at 2 pm, the objective of which is to gather questions and develop Council perspective to comment at the public session. The project team for the dam has not yet made public a proposed restoration plan, but are expected to do so at a yet-to-be-scheduled May public meeting. B. McCusker and D. Migneault asked that Jim Turek or another project team member be invited to the workshop to provide information. K. Donnelly has provided the slide show from the project meeting that

occurred last month, which can be reviewed prior to the May 6 workshop. It was suggested that, should further information be desirable subsequent to the workshop and prior to submitting any Council comments, experts can be invited afterwards. D. Prescott suggested it would be advisable to develop Council comments after project is better defined at the project team's May meeting. C. Heil noted that he and E. Caldarone will seek and consider, as town representatives, the town's perspective as well, for input to Council decision-making. J. Fosburgh noted that NPS will be consulted on this federally funded and federally permitted project, and will be writing its own letter with any concerns.

3. Advisory Committee:

Bryson presented the proposed Advisory Committee Review Procedure and Review Survey for approval by the Council. P. August noted that these are living documents that set forth the current thinking on Council processes, but can be changed in the future in light of experience. There being no discussion, P. August moved to approve both documents and D. Migneault seconded, and the motion passed.

4. Projects Committee

Idea Pre-Proposal Review Process:

- N. Quinlan reported that the Committee is working on how to deal with ideas that come in from the Council or towns before they become formal proposals. The Committee hopes to have its recommendation in the form of a procedure ready for review at the May Council meeting. P. August noted that this year's process for selecting projects has been documented and is available on the download site.
- P. Lardner reported on the Council's Earth Day cleanup event. Everything went smoothly, and its success set the groundwork for a potentially bigger event next year. F. Wagner served as a popular ambassador, W&S hats were a big hit, and the information cards which were provided turned out to be quite important. Next month she hopes to have a film of whole day available.

5. Information & Education Committee

- P. August reported that the Council is adopting Google calendar for both its public facing calendar on the website and for internal events. He demonstrated its use. For the external calendar, members can send posts to K. Donnelly, P. August or D. Prescott and they will post. Kassi will control the external calendar. For the internal calendar, members can have edit access should they wish. Instructions are in the document description (download). Members can contact P. August for more help if they need it.
- The April edition of Dragonfly was sent out this morning. S. Baker undertook the revisions and final editing and produced the new look.
- D. Migneault requested that the Council approve the transfer of \$3000 from the Committee's signage budget to its branding budget, as signage needs are currently minimal and branding needs face a shortfall. B. McCusker moved to transfer the funds, F. Wagner seconded and the motion was

approved.

- D. Migneault reported that the Committee plans to expand signage to ponds and lakes in the watershed. The Committee is coming up with a list of popular or visible candidates, and members should send in nominations.

New Business

Nomination of Officers

- Officers must be elected by May 31. D. Prescott reported that J. Ericson is not running for another term as Chair. D. Prescott is seeking another term as Vice-Chair, P. August another term as Treasurer, and A. Bryson a term as Secretary. D. Prescott requested nominations from the floor for any of the officer positions.
- P. Lardner nominated C. Grube for the office of Chair. C. Grube accepted the nomination.
- N. Quinlan nominated D. Prescott as Vice Chair. B. McCusker nominated D. Migneault for Vice Chair. D. Migneault accepted the nomination. C. Heil nominated F. Wagner for Vice Chair. F. Wagner declined the nomination.
- F. Wagner nominated P. August for Treasurer.
- F. Wagner nominated A. Bryson for Secretary.
- D. Prescott then asked for a motion to close the nominations. F. Wagner so moved, and N. Quinlan seconded. The motion was approved.
- D. Prescott then explained how voting will proceed. There will be a Google Form link for voting circulated for the May meeting, which will be provided six days before the meeting. Members should vote prior to the meeting. For each office, voters will be asked to choose a candidate or abstain.
- D. Prescott called for a motion to permit alternate members to vote. B. McCusker so moved and D. Migneault seconded, and the motion passed.
- The voting totals will be presented at the May meeting and members will be asked to ratify the voting results.

Review of Project Review Google Form--postponed

Town Updates

- D. Prescott reported on a meeting regarding the Tri-Town Kayak Trail. Hopkinton has joined and it will now be a 4-town trail. The group has agreed that L. Bonatakis will be the new convenor of meetings and shepherd the process. The group has engaged with the Pequots, and has identified a new access site on river. C. Heil requested a briefing on the status so he can be knowledgeable in talks with Hopkinton Town Council.

- K. Donnelly reported on the presentation to the Hopkinton Conservation Commission on the origins and role of the Council. L. Bonatakis assisted, and the slides of the presentation are available for general use. Friends of the Land Trust and the Land Trust attended. E. Caldarone reported that it was very well received.

Good of the Order

- C. Heil reported that Hopkinton has passed an ordinance prohibiting commercial solar installations. F. Wagner reported he is arranging a visit to the Circus lot in Stonington. The town is pursuing grant funding for an assessment preliminary to potential plans for use of the lot.
- A. Bryson reported that, in light of the comments received on the proposed advisory letter to the Richmond town planner on the applications for residential development on Beaver River Road, the Advisory Committee would be revising the letter and the process so that members would have more information and time to review it.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by P. August, seconded by F. Wagner, and adjournment was approved at 7:25 PM.

Next Meeting: Fourth Wednesday of each month at 5 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2021.

