

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council

Minutes

Meeting Held on September 22, 2021

In Attendance: Hopkinton: Elaine Caldarone, Chip Heil; Richmond: Antonia Bryson, Pete August; North Stonington: Madeline Jeffery; Stonington: Fred Wagner; South Kingstown: Bill McCusker; West Greenwich: Chris Grube, Pat Lardner; Westerly: Jon Ericson; CT DEEP: Eric Thomas; Save the Bay: Dave Prescott; Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association: Brett Still; National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh, Lauren Bonatakis; Kassi Donnelly, Coordinator.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

Secretary's Report: A. Bryson presented the draft minutes of the August 25, 2021 meeting. F. Wagner moved to accept the minutes as presented, J. Ericson seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Report:

P. August presented the monthly financial report, with appended biweekly accounting summaries. F. Wagner moved to accept the report, M. Jeffery seconded, and the motion passed.

P. August reported that he and K. Donnelly were close to a full reconciliation of Council's 2020-21 budget, and thereafter will be able to establish the amount of unspent and unobligated funds. The 2021-22 budget is comprised of what was the anticipated carryover plus new NPS funds. He asked the members to consider how to allocate the approximately \$20,000-25,000 in unallocated carryover from 2021-22. Two suggestions were to put additional funds in the small grant program currently being launched, or to review unfunded projects from the last cycle of project requests from Council members. It is also possible to defer allocating the monies until January when there should be a better perspective on needs. Discussion ensued. A. Bryson moved to obligate unspent rollover funds to the small grants program so that the program has an increased total from \$7,500 to \$16,000 in funding, and F. Wagner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. There was agreement to consider additional funding for the program once the total amount of rollover is determined.

P. August requested that the Council streamline approvals for spending approved budget items by allowing electronic voting in place of approval at a regular meeting. This would allow for quicker approvals. J. Fosburgh informed members that NPS does not require additional authorization for spending after a budget has been approved. P. August explained why the Council had previously wanted to add this extra step, and discussion ensued. There was a consensus that such additional approvals were no longer necessary, as budgets and line items were better designed and more detailed. K. Donnelly noted that she will continue to monitor expenditures, and that she and P. August must approve all expenditures. A. Bryson noted that a report of expenditures made might be added to the financial report at monthly meetings. She moved to forgo the additional approvals entirely, and F. Wagner seconded. E. Thomas indicated that eliminating that step was not sufficiently explained in the meeting agenda. It was agreed to table to issue until the next regular meeting, and A. Bryson withdrew the motion.

F. Wagner requested that the next meeting agenda include a discussion of the budgeted but unspent \$18,000 allocated to the kayak trail.

Committee Requests

1. Projects: K. Donnelly presented the application form for the small grants program. The Projects Committee developed the form based on application procedures of similar programs existing at other Wild and Scenic River organizations. They also received feedback from Council members who piloted an earlier version. Discussion ensued. Some were concerned about the length of the application given the size of potential grants, but others felt the process was appropriate to the task, and that measures were included to weed out unlikely applicants and to allow the review process to be targeted and not unduly long. There was also discussion about the rubric, and about the portion of the application to be filled out by the town representative. B. Still moved to approve the application form as proposed, and P. August seconded. The motion passed with two members opposed.

2. Executive: C. Grube presented the outline of member presentations to town governing bodies. He indicated he will be sending out additional descriptions of Council projects for inclusion in the presentation. He will be presenting at the October West Greenwich town council meeting, and urged all members to comply. C. Heil requested that the Council provide a written directive to members asking for an official appearance to distinguish the appearance from appearances before the town in a member's other capacities. J. Ericson suggested mentioning town staff or officials that members might be working with in addition to the script. B. McCusker suggested adding public outreach programs to list of activities, and promised the I&E committee will draft wording. C. Heil suggested adding an item for each town. He would like to know how to respond to questions on the Potter Hill dam project. E. Thomas reminded members to emphasize an understanding watershed perspective, beyond an individual town's focus on matters within its own boundaries.

Committee Reports

1. Information and Education:

The Committee met about the event at Grey Sail Brewery, which will take place at 2 pm on 10/17. B. McCusker urged members to come and support the table at the Exeter Land Trust event on 10/16. He reported that the Committee has ordered signs for ponds in CT and RI. The Committee requested approval for expenditures listed below. B. McCusker moved that the Committee be authorized to spend \$5,130 for outreach expenditures, F. Wagner seconded. It was noted that the calculations of amount needed contained mathematical errors. P. August will correct them. The motion passed with that caveat [mathematical error resolved in the list below].

- 2 tables \$75 each - \$150
- 2 tents \$180 each - \$360
- 1 banner \$80 - \$80
- 2 photo and rack card stands \$50 each - \$100
- 1 Watershed map with stand and design cost - \$650
- 30 T-Shirts \$15 each - \$450
- 46 Sweatshirts for Council members who work the events \$40 each - \$1,840
- 300 Note cards - \$600
- 300 Business cards - \$300
- 30 River signs & hardware - \$600
- TOTAL \$5,130

2. Questions/Comments:

There were none.

New Business

Town/Community Updates: waived due to lack of time.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by P. Lardner, and seconded by F. Wagner. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm.

Next Meeting: Fourth Wednesday of each month at 5 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2021.