

**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed  
Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council**

**Minutes  
Meeting held on October 26, 2022**

In Attendance: Exeter: Nan Quinlan; Hopkinton, Chip Heil; North Kingstown: Ahren Cohen; North Stonington: Madeleine Jeffery; Richmond: Antonia Bryson, Pete August; Sterling: Kim Gunn; West Greenwich: Chris Grube, Pat Lardner; CT DEEP: Eric Thomas; National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh; Kassi Donnelly, Coordinator.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

Secretary's Report:

A. Bryson presented the draft minutes of the August 24, 2022 meeting. P. August moved to approve the minutes as presented, and M. Jeffery seconded. There being no discussion, the motion passed and the minutes were approved.

Financial Report:

P. August presented the bi-monthly financial report. A. Cohen moved to approve the report as presented, and C. Heil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A. Bryson requested the treasurer remind the membership as to the intended use of unspent funds in those categories in which there are large amounts yet unspent. He agreed to work on this with the Coordinator and present at a later time.

Discussion: Advertising Wild and Scenic Community Grants

- K. Donnelly provided overview of the revised community grant program. Eligible activities include land acquisition or management activities, promotion of free-flowing rivers and water quality, and activities which support the exceptional ecosystems, hydrology/geology, and cultural and scenic/recreational aspects of the watershed. Grant awards up to \$4,000 are available and applications are due December 29, 2022. Eligible applicants include non-profits, municipalities and others. Eligible locations are within the watershed towns.
- There was discussion of the advertising strategy. K. Donnelly has worked with the I&E Committee on revising the website. She plans to announce the grant opportunity to contacts in community this week. She provided a list of town contacts to all members in an Excel spreadsheet sent last week, and members can help advertise. She is also sending a letter to those contacts, with a copy to the respective town representative. She will be using social media and listservs. Press will be handled by Hugh Markey.
- P. August suggested getting the WPWA constant contact list, and possibly contacting previous recipients. N. Quinlan noted that many RI communities may experience a turnover in officials after the upcoming election, and will not have much time to prepare an application. C. Heil thought the deadline is too tight for towns. K. Donnelly noted that only two out of seven grants previously awarded have been to towns. M. Jeffery believed one letter is not enough to solicit applicants and we would need to follow up.
- This week K. Donnelly has sent out to members a message that can be forwarded to others. This will be repeated next week. She will talk to Hugh Markey about repeating placement of information about the program. M. Jeffery asked to see the press copy, and to have a list of the press to which it is sent. P.

August suggested adding a press release tab to the website. C. Heil wondered if the Council could buy advertising for the program. He also suggested sending the information to the RI Infrastructure Bank.

### Committee and Project Updates:

#### Projects:

- M. Jeffery continues to collect works from artists celebrating the rivers. She hopes the collection will be digitized and made permanent. She may bring in the artwork for viewing prior to any Stewardship Council workshops in November and December.
- N. Quinlan reported that changes in leadership at the Exeter DPW and Town Hall precludes putting in a rain garden at town hall at the present time. She will try again in the spring. She has a plan for the garden and has done winter sowing of the flowers, so she is ready to proceed when it's feasible.
- K. Donnelly reported on an ORV event coming up 12/13 at Glacier Park. Westerly land trust personnel will lead hike on their property. All members are invited to help host. A. Cohen and N. Quinlan volunteered.

#### Committees:

- The Advisory Committee received a response from RI DEM to its letter supporting cessation of stocking of hatchery raised trout in the upper Wood River. RI DEM advised they would need more data in order to take that step, and encouraged the Council to work with them. E. Thomas shared the letter with fisheries people in CT who could help with studies. The Committee will consider what action to take at its next meeting.
- The Committee is aware of a major proposed residential development in Hopkinton known as the Brushy Brook development and is discussing possible action.
- Committee members toured the Stormwater Innovation Center at Roger Williams Park in Providence to obtain in-person knowledge of advanced BMPs for stormwater. The Innovation Center is holding a "Stormwater Expo" on 11/30, about which information is available on its website, [stormwaterinnovation.org](http://stormwaterinnovation.org). Funding is available for members to attend, and RIDOT will pay for municipal officials to attend.
- The I&E Committee has been reviewing material for advertising the grant program.
- K. Donnelly reported that WPWA performed emergency tree removal on the upper Wood River. Water quality data processing is complete. The youth adventure program served well over 500 youth and has been completed.

#### Town/Community Updates:

- M. Jeffery informed members of an opportunity to create open space in the center of North Stonington due to the demolition of a school. E. Thomas noted that the 2017 flood resiliency plan recommended the site as suitable for bioretention.
- C. Grube is setting up a symposium on residential solar to assist West Greenwich residents in determining the costs and benefits.

#### New Business

K. Donnelly reported that the Appalachian Mountain Club chapter working on restoring the Narragansett trail is looking for a new leader.

Next Meeting or Workshop: The next meeting will be a workshop, to be held on November 16, 2022 at the WPWA campus. It will be in-person only.

### Adjournment

There being no other business, P. August moved to adjourn the meeting and P. Lardner seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.