



**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed  
Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council  
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024, 5 pm to 7 pm*

*Westerly Land Trust,  
449 Westerly Bradford Rd, Westerly, RI 02891*

Abbreviations: Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council (WPWSRSC or Council), Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), National Park Service (NPS), Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM), Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA), Save The Bay (STB), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Westerly Land Trust (WLT), Information and Education (I&E), Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience (OSCAR ) Fund Grant, Mainstreet Resiliency Projects (MRP)

Attendance:

**Nan Quinlan, Exeter, RI (Projects Committee)**  
**Sharon MacLean, Exeter, RI (Information and Education Committee)**  
**Ahren Cohen, North Kingstown, RI (Council Treasurer)**  
**Madeline Jeffery, North Stonington, CT (Projects Committee, Information & Education Committee Co-Chair)**  
**Elaine Caldarone, North Stonington, CT (Council Vice Chair, Projects Committee Chair, I&E)**  
**Antonia Bryson, Richmond, RI (Council Chair, Advisory Committee Co-chair)**  
**Denise Poyer, Richmond, RI (Council Secretary)**  
**Fred Wagner, Stonington, CT (Advisory Committee)**  
**Tom Halavik, South Kingstown, RI**  
**Lauren Bonatakis, National Parks Service (NPS)**  
**Chris Bellucci, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP)**  
**Harvey Perry, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)**  
**Jenn Fusco, Westerly Land Trust**  
**Scott Farley, Applicant for Representative of Town of Westerly**  
**Fred Sculco, Westerly Resident**  
**Pete Ogle, Westerly Resident**  
**Harvey Buford, Applicant for Representative of Town of Hopkinton**

Meeting Convened at: 5:02 pm

Secretary's Report: Minutes of July 24th, 2024 meeting approved.

Committee Updates:

1. Executive Committee (Antonia Bryson, Richmond)
  - a. Status Report on current “fiscal year” (see attached) – Antonia gave a brief update on current workplan so that the council understands how it was developed and where the spending is proposed.
  - b. Workplan Proposal with possible initiatives
    - i. Antonia explained that the workplan for the next fiscal year should be developed by February 2025. She encouraged the members to think about initiatives that would fulfill the Plan goals and provide visibility for the Council in its role in protecting the rivers.
    - ii. Denise presented two concepts for initiatives. The council is invited to submit their own ideas for initiatives at the next meeting.
    - iii. Ideally the council will select one or two initiatives to be included in next year’s workplan.
    - iv. Timeline:
      1. Submit ideas at the October meeting
      2. Discuss ideas at November meeting
      3. Select priorities at the December meeting
      4. Develop workplan and submit to NPS by February 2025
    - v. Concepts should be fleshed out enough to satisfy NPS, including objectives and probable budget, how it will be handled and how it ties into the Stewardship Plan
    - vi. It was suggested that council members read Chapter 6 to become reacquainted with its goals
  - c. Executive committee is working on a Welcome Packet for new members
2. Projects Committee (Elaine Caldarone, North Stonington)
  - a. Community Grants announcement
  - b. Accepting RFP Oct 1 to Dec 31
  - c. Grants are up to \$4000
  - d. Open to non-profits, for profits should partner with non-profit
3. Advisory Committee (Antonia filling for Chris Grube, West Greenwich)
  - a. Previous projected use of the allotted funds for the LID project may not be possible because the towns don’t have the time and resources to take advantage. Town representatives are encouraged to speak with their planners to become familiar with the town priorities.
  - b. Harvey Perry and Fred Sculco presented a proposed plan to support the towns in the watershed, and their town representatives on the Council, to help achieve Action Plans in the Stewardship Plan.
    - i. Harvey and Fred will expand their proposal to include specific Action Plans that their proposal can address.
  - c. Exeter rep has asked the council to send a letter concerning the use of the Canonicus Property
4. Information & Education Committee (Madeline Jeffery, North Stonington & Bob Maietta, Charlestown)
  - a. Grey Sail Celebration for Grant Receivers was held on Sun, 9/22
  - b. Newsletter #3, Late Summer has gone out
  - c. (2) Tents and Tabling: Charlestown and Voluntown
  - d. #3 Podcast is “Stone walls”. Looking for ideas for future podcasts.
  - e. Signature Event Special Meeting, 8/29 decide to postpone a large event until 2025. Instead they propose to conduct several good quality small events.
  - f. There was a preliminary discussion regarding expansion of "to inform and to educate". They would like to better coordinate future endeavors with unifying themes.

Working Group Updates:

1. Kenyon Mills Working Group (Denise Poyer, Richmond)
  - a. Still coordinating the ad hoc committee. So far Corey and Nan have agreed to serve.
2. Wild Brook Trout Working Group (Tom Halavik, South Kingstown)
  - a. Ad hoc committee is being coordinated by Bob Maietta

Partner Updates:

1. CT DEEP:
  - a. Chris Bellucci reported that they hope to recruit a replacement for Eric Thomas by the end of the year.
  - b. Rewriting Long Island Sound Program.
  - c. Reminded the Council that RIDEM has a Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Plan.
  - d. Volunteer program called Riffle Assessment that encourages volunteers to do macro invertebrate assessments. Information will be posted in the chat.
  - e. Chris will send information links to Casey.
2. NPS
  - a. Congress has passed a continuing resolution which funds NPS until the end of the year. They will not know what is appropriated for the PWSR program until Congress passes a full budget.
  - b. Last call for anyone who wants to attend the organizational workshop. A best practices report will come out sometime in October.
3. RI DEM – no report
4. Save the Bay – no report
5. Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association – no report
6. The Nature Conservancy – Beaver River Preserve had a dam washed away and TNC is documenting the resulting habitat restoration.
7. Westerly Land Trust
  - a. Started third year of living laboratories with Westerly schools.
  - b. Working on acquiring a property along the Pawcatuck River near Boom Bridge Road.

Town Representative Updates:

Exeter – Canonicus Property may have restrictions from a previous will.

Stonington – Anyone working with federal funding right now may encounter a lot of uncertainty until after the elections.

South Kingstown – RIDEM has contacted SK about hydrilla on Worden Pond. Also blue-green algae has been found in Worden Pond. RIDEM will provide the council with a presentation on hydrilla at the October meeting.

North Stonington – Madeline felt that it is difficult to provide towns in CT with adequate information about WPWSSC concerns. The Council may need to think about a new approach, possibly assigning a new task committee.

Good of the Order:

Public Comment: Peter Ogle, a Westerly resident, provided a report prepared by Dr. Denise Burchsted concerning the Potter Hill Dam and its upper reach.

Next Meeting: **5pm-7pm, October 16, 2024**

Adjourn: 6:50 pm