



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

*Wednesday, January 22, 2025  
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)

Attendance:

**Bob Maietta, Charlestown, RI (Information and Education Committee Co-Chair)**  
**Justin Andrade, Charlestown, RI**  
**Sharon MacLean, Exeter, RI (Information & Education Committee)**  
**Nan Quinlan, Exeter, RI (Projects Committee)**  
**Harvey Buford, Hopkinton, RI (Projects 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 Committee)**  
**Antonia Bryson, Richmond, RI (Council Chair, Advisory Committee Co-chair)**  
**Denise Poyer, Richmond, RI (Council Secretary)**  
**Tom Halavik, South Kingstown, RI (Projects Committee)**  
**Fred Wagner, Stonington, CT (Advisory Committee)**  
**Chris Grube, West Greenwich, RI (Advisory Committee Co-Chair)**  
**Tom Ryan, West Greenwich, RI**  
**Lauren Bonatakis, National Parks Service (NPS)**  
**Dr. Catie Alves, Save The Bay (STB)**  
**Chris Bellucci, CTDEEP**  
**Corey Pelletier, RIDEM (Projects Committee)**  
**Chris Fox, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association**  
**Jennifer Fusco, Westerly Land Trust**  
**Casey Merkle, Council Coordinator**

Meeting Convened at: 5:01 pm

Secretary's Report: Minutes of December 18, 2024 meeting approved.

## Town Representative Updates:

1. Charlestown, RI (Bob Maietta, Charlestown)
  - a. Mostly in the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed with some parts in the coastal plain.
  - b. Contains a lot of protected open space and also includes Narragansett Tribe land.
  - c. Very little retail in the town.
  - d. Very low taxes due to high value houses along the coast.
  - e. There is a very active conservation group. However, politics are preventing any further purchase of protected lands.
  - f. One of the biggest issues is water and septic use along the coast. Excessive development may ultimately require acquiring water from Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed aquifers.
  - g. Charlestown is in good compliance with state regulations and best management practices for environmental issues.
  - h. Zoning is mostly single family two acres.
  - i. Superfund site near the Pawcatuck River at Kenyon Mill that is being watched.
  - j. Housing prices are high and not easily accessible to average income people.
2. Hopkinton, RI (Harvey Buford, Hopkinton)
  - a. Hopkinton is fully within the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed.
  - b. There are thirteen villages, basically around dammed river segments associated with mills.
  - c. Very little agricultural soil.
  - d. Five campgrounds and a large Boy Scout camp.
  - e. The biggest change in the last ten years is the large-scale solar panel installations. They are placed in appropriate sites that would have been better for development.
  - f. The north end of Hopkinton is on Richmond town water.
  - g. Housing development has exploded over the past 25 years, with most people moving in from core cities.
  - h. Contains many sites of Native American stonework.
  - i. The last dam to be removed on the Pawcatuck River is the Potter Hill Mill.

## Committee Updates:

1. Executive Committee (Antonia Bryson, Richmond)
  - a. Proposed FY25 Budget (July 2025 - July 2026) was reviewed (see attached).
  - b. Vote on the budget will be done at the Council's February meeting.
2. Projects Committee (Elaine Caldarone, North Stonington)
  - a. Twelve proposals have come in from several different groups all over the watershed.
  - b. In person meeting this week to go over the applications.
  - c. Recommendations will be presented at the February meeting. A vote by the council will be taken at this time.
3. Advisory Committee (Antonia, Richmond)
  - a. Final letter regarding Connanicus has been sent out.
4. Information & Education Committee (Co-Chair Madeline Jeffery, North Stonington & Co-Chair Bob Maietta, Charlestown)
  - a. Several projects are in the works.
  - b. Clothing items with Wild and Scenic logo will be available to Council members soon.

## Working Group Updates:

1. Kenyon Mills Working Group (Denise Poyer, Richmond)
  - a. The committee will be meeting next week.
2. Wild Brook Trout Working Group (Bob Maietta, Charlestown)
  - a. The group has had three meetings and hopes to have a mission statement at the next meeting.

## Partner Updates:

1. CT DEEP
  - a. Nonpoint source grants applications are open.
2. NPS
  - a. They are treating everything as business as usual until they hear otherwise.
  - b. Restarting a speaker series on Zoom. They will be sending out emails on times and topics, possibly starting in February.
3. RI DEM
  - a. The Trees for Trout collection event was in January. This is also an opportunity to educate the public about stream restoration by handing out pamphlets to everyone who drops off a tree.
4. Save the Bay no report
5. Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
  - a. Purchased a trailer to transport kayaks, which can be used for other purposes. Council members are welcome to borrow.
  - b. Hudson Pond dam removal is in the permitting process.
  - c. Six hundred feet of Office space rental is available.
6. The Nature Conservancy no report
7. Westerly Land Trust
  - a. Hike at Cottrell Family Preserve tomorrow.
  - b. Another hike scheduled at Grills Preserve in March.

Good of the Order:

Richmond is looking into applying for SNEP stormwater practices. They have agreed to have Casey and Richmond DPW attend education sessions.

The Town of South Kingstown has put together a group of state and federal officials to discuss the hydrilla situation in Worden Pond.

Public Comment: none

Adjourn: 6:44 pm

Next Meeting: 5pm-7pm, February 26, 2025