

**Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee
Minutes**

Thursday, October 18, 2018 – Berkshire Elementary School, Berkshire

Attendees: Jacques Couture, Ellen Fox, Carol Hickey, Jim MacCartney, Bethany Remmers, Jenevra Wetmore, Brendan O'Shea, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting called to order at 6:37 pm. Carol was again our secretary for this meeting – thank you Carol!

Minutes of the September 20th meeting were reviewed. There was not a quorum, so we will approve these minutes during the November minutes.

River Community Grants:

Brendan O'Shea from Montgomery Rec presented on Riverwalk Park work rehabbing the trails and building a set of steps down to the water conducted by the VYCC. He gave the history of flooding in the area – after the 1997 flood, FEMA bought out the landowners and gave the land to the town to be used as open space. The town created Riverwalk Park and has been working to improve it since then. The VYCC crew cost \$7,500 for the week with 8 kids working. VYCC brought in a person to design the workplan in advance of the crew, and rocks were procured from the blasting work on 105. The crew built the steps (under 10 cu yards, so no permit needed) and the remaining rocks were used to line the field to discourage driving there. Jim was a little concerned with the design, the VYCC had someone design project in advance.

Brendan commented that Montgomery is lucky to have so much town-owned land by the Rivers, and also had high praise for the VYCC crew who worked hard with no power tools. He suggested that the W&S Committee consider booking a crew for area work each year, and then allow towns to apply to utilize them. Brendan booked them in February last year.

4 final reports have been submitted for our 2018 grants; Linda Collins sent pictures of the beautification work that took place in Davis Park in Richford; Lindsey passed these around.

Administrative Business:

The water testing sets that we previously purchased are difficult to use in a field setting (but may work for classrooms. Lindsey will look into other test sets. Waterproof backpacks for creating loaner “kits” are available for \$25-40. When loaning out the kits, we should include a short eval of “what worked well/is anything missing”. Other kit ideas: flow regimes/river morphology and dynamics – will need rock sizing tool (cobble, etc); floating object; tape measure; velocity; discharge. Lindsey will purchase 2 backpacks and put two loaner kits together as a start.

Yard signs – just have them say “Wild and Scenic Rivers” in our blue/gold flyer colors; Lindsey will order 10 so that we can use them to attract attention at events.

T-shirts were re-ordered with logo on front and same map on the back, plus wider and more visible rivers. We will offer them for sale for \$15.

UMATR acronym: write it out as UMAtTeR? Or write UMATR and then underneath use the phonetic, like a dictionary entry.

Tent options were discussed. A made in America tent with logo is \$1,200. Printing our logo/acronym adds a good amount of extra money. Our budget is \$300-1000, and there are cheaper options. We will wait until next month for decisions, but will want to go for decent quality within our budget.

Lindsey might need to change her title from independent contractor, also a problem through the MRBA right now. Doing so will add a lever of accounting and could add a possible budget item- FICA/workmen's comp, possibly beginning January 1st (probably not possible at this point; wait another year, and let funders know that it is in process?). Watershed groups could share a CPA, centralize payroll function? JC suggested that we ask

around and hire someone. BR has seen other groups go through this; Catherine and Amy at NRPC may be able to give advice.

Jenevra wrote an article about the 50th Anniversary of the W&S Rivers Act that was in VTDigger.

Financials: outstanding projects include more NFCT-created access points; the map. Should we offer larger grants next year? Larger amount over all, or larger max? Other potential funding uses: land protection projects? Access point acquisition? Remediate culverts – partner with a town to make it “fish friendly”.

Projects:

Newsletter – should we rush one for 2018, or wait until we can post about the 2019 events? Additional stories? Highlight the national/other systems? Danielle’s study (the other river that flows into Canada)? 50th/National system – the fact that the system continues to grow: East Rosebud Creek, study rivers.

North Troy fishing platform: There is a VTFWD fishing platform below Bristol Falls; Kristen Underwood was involved; could reach out to her for design assistance. However, we need to make sure that any action we take is a shared vision, not just our vision. Makes more sense start with a feasibility study so that we can assess community desires (public meeting) and site suitability (would the community USE this, can the bank stability support it, etc). Reach out to landscape architects (i.e. VHB, with Milone and MacBroom design?) or work with NRPC to contract for this? Ask them to partner for community brainstorming. Alternative option to honor Jim Starr is an outdoor classroom with interpretive signage.

Storybook: Would need to have shared rights (Lamprey has a contract we could probably adapt), so that the Committee has rights and can sell the book, but the author’s work is protected, too). Susan is still interested in working with us on this, and open to the idea of a phased contract. Concerns about phasing, though: always a chance that we won’t make it to the deliverable. We should adopt a procurement policy; that will tell us if we need to put this project out to bid.

Events:

Nov 2 – the ECO AmeriCorps program is having an intergenerational diversity training. Let Lindsey know if any Committee members would be interested in attending.

Nov 4 - Bonfire Along The River, at Riverwalk Park. Bring wood and chairs!

December 20 – Solstice Potluck, at Richford High School. In place of our typical meeting.

2019 events: Taste of Montgomery? Collaborate with the town – planning commission (Barry Kade)?; snowshoes in Feb, W&S Film Fest - possibly November? Not a Monday this time; Gathering – still in August, need larger signs; just 1 Paddle & Picnic (switch counties each year?); painting event(s)? – start early, connect with artists; more educational talks – piggyback on other groups events?

Other/Public Comment: Upstream of Longley bridge, the river is moving toward the road – approx. 1000 linear feet. Possible floodplain terrace (avoid riprap)?

Upcoming Meetings:

November 15 – Orleans County – Lowell
December 20 – Richford (Solstice Potluck)
January 17 – Westfield?

Wrap up and adjourn: JC motioned, EF seconded, all in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:37.