

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, October 23, 2019 – Montgomery Public Safety Building/Library, Montgomery

Attendees: Jacques Couture, Russ Ford, Carol Hickey, John Little, Jim MacCartney, Keith Sampietro, Cynthia Scott, Wendy Scott, Dan Seeley, Ranier Lucas, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting called to order at 6:35. Wendy was our secretary for this meeting. Thank you Wendy!

Approving the September minutes was held until our November meeting; Lindsey didn't have time to distribute them.

Administrative Business: The ECO AmeriCorps program is holding a "working with differences" training on two upcoming Fridays, the 8th and the 15th. Ranier and a member of our organization are required to go. Lindsey has previously attended this training twice, and John Little went last year. It's a good training – runs 9:30-3:30 in Burlington. Let Lindsey know if you are able to attend.

Cynthia went over the financial report for the third quarter of 2019.

River Community Grants: Cold hollow to Canada has applied for \$9,239.49 to work with the Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative to develop a database an interactive portal for shared info about wildlife movements (Keeping Track) in this region. The grants subcommittee recommends approving this project. Committee member suggest that we be sure to require acknowledgement of our funding for this project on the final product. CS motioned to approve; WS seconded; all in favor – project is approved.

Other projects that may be forth coming: North Country High School is interested in getting canoes for school use/getting kids out on our waterways. Concern: who will be responsible for these boats care and replacement?

Total Granted in 2019: \$25,291, so we still have funding remaining from our budgeted \$60k - Next year we have budgeted \$30,000 in grants.

We have some outstanding funds – JM suggested Lindsey send a gentle reminder that unclaimed funds could go away. Ways to spread the word about this funding source: submit press release/ reminder to each town that grant money is available. Also, explain some projects that have been done – a "things we will fund" list (i.e. culverts – bigger pipes for AOP, rec experiences, match for larger project - some towns might use W&S for a match for another grant. Also: reach out to Conservation Districts and other Watershed groups about projects they're already planning/working on.

Perhaps raise the funding amount for requiring a presentation at one of our meetings – maybe say that this could happen (but additional funds will cover?) if we are interested in hearing more about your project. They we can select projects that are helpful for the Committee to hear about.

Need to re-form grant subcommittee: Russ and Carol are interested in continuing; Jacques says he will join.

Projects: The VYCC crew came back this week. Since the Mill Brook project is delayed, they planted trees with MRBA. They also finished benches in North Troy. Lindsey will check into getting plaques in honor of Jim Starr. VT Trophy and Engraving could likely do these as an outdoor installation. 4 benches, 4 quotes (by Jim? About woods and water? About the Red Sox?) – Lindsey will ask the family for suggestions.

How to spread the word about this property and the new benches – story in the Courier (Ed Barber?); kiosk at the ball field (with a map of the site, a map of the river, the bench locations) – made of resilient materials.

The VYCC crew also put together (but did not install) a new privy at Doe Camp. Keith said that he and Noah Pollack (NFCT) will install the privy. The picnic table there is also in disrepair; RF made a motion to fund the materials for a new table; KS said he could build it. CH seconded; all in favor.

Keith submitted videos and a report from the River Explorer trip and the Montgomery Rec trips. Lindsey/Rainer will get them online.

Westfield Bank Stabilization project is delayed again.

Project Priorities for 2020: Leave No Trace workshop; Lindsey will have names of possible groups to invite and possible leaders at the November meeting.

- Access Point: Davis Park: improve steps? Lawyer's Landing: RF and friend manage the removable steps; it's very muddy and a more permanent structure would be nice. Brownway Trail: upstream end of trail; some stone steps? Lindsey will discuss these options with NFCT. Let her know if you have more access point ideas.
- JM brought up the fragility of some of the access points (not conserved, just landowner agreement). Vermont River Conservancy or Vermont Land Trust might be able to help make access points more permanent; we could buy some staff time from River Conservancy to help with protecting river frontage but also access points specifically in our region? Lindsey will reach out and see how we can help these groups prioritize our areas/how we "get on the list".
- RF brought up that Sampsonville dam is an instream hazard/eyesore, it would be great to partner with NFCT and see about at least removing some rebar in the short term; and investigating full removal. NFCT may be able to work on this; or we may need to hire a firm. Potentially a significant capital project. Lindsey will start this discussion with partners: feasibility of the project, as a start.
- Longley Bridge Road Project - erosion. Town will be contracting with a firm to design the fix they have a grant for – likely after Town Meeting. It would be great to also get a design for the downstream erosion; most efficient to do in conjunction; tie in with what will be done upstream. Lindsey asked if we support spending money on the design plan. CS motioned that we investigate increasing the scope of the project upstream to include the Barnard property. WS seconded; all in favor.

Wild and Scenic Film Fest – November 30: 9 films; will need volunteers. Who plans to attend, so Lindsey can figure out if we'll have enough volunteer coverage? CH, JL, WS, JC, DS. Lindsey will reach out to Jay to see if they can help to advertise the event on-campus.

2020 Events: shelved for the November meeting, due to time constraints.

Other/Public Comment: KS followed up about the Fishing tournament – there aren't any scheduled in our region, so we should aim to hold one in late April or early May.

Upcoming meetings: November 21 – Orleans County – change to Westfield
December 19 – Franklin County – Potluck? Lindsey will inquire if we could do our INN meeting this month instead. If so, start at 6pm.
January 16 – Orleans County – Lowell

Wrap up and adjourn: DS motioned; CH seconded. All in favor; meeting ended at 8:30.