

**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
Board of Trustees Meeting
Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2014**

Attending: Alan Desbonnet, Helen Drew, Walt Galloway, Pete August, Chris Fox, Jennifer MacKenzie, Mal Grant, Antonia Bryson

Excused: Kim Coulter, T Boving

Not in Attendance: Grace Lentini

1. Call to Order 6:36 PM H. Drew

Helen explained that the main purpose of this meeting was to Pass the 2015 Budget and to include Wild and Scenic

Pete – move to approve last month's minutes, Alan – submitted corrections and Seconded. Approved.

2. ED Report - Chris

- a. The Conservation Easement over the Jeffries Property (Boulder Farm) in North Stonington (178 acres) was signed by C. Fox on 12/5. To recognize the owner's effort to protect her land, WPWA will issue a newsletter article and a press release. The easement was accepted based on a verbal agreement with the owner that a WPWA staff member would assess the land annually in exchange for a one time financial donation to support the required staff commitment in perpetuity. We recognize that our record keeping needs improvement. Therefore, Antonia Bryson will review and recommend a method to inventory, track and monitor our portfolio of properties. This fits in with our mission to protect and conserve lands in the Watershed.
- b. Madeline Jeffries will provide WPWA with a lump sum endowment of appx \$15,000 with the intention that WPWA use the annual interest to support the staff time required to fulfill the easement's annual requirements and keep the principal preserved for any possible legal expenses related to the property. Pete suggested we put it in with other investments and Chris explained that it must be kept separate as it will be considered a restricted donation. The donor will provide a letter that will describe the funding restrictions at the time of the donation.
- c. The WPWA Ray Cherenzia Memorial Fund has appx \$1500 in it that was contributed by WPWA board members. It is not growing with any significant return due to a lack of follow through fundraising by the board. Not seeing any board capacity to revitalize the fundraising effort, Chris discussed expending the fund with the Cherenzia Family. They would like to create a memorial bench and use the WPWA funds to offset the cost. Chris will cash out the fund and put it into a savings account until the bench is designed and

built by the Cherenzia family. We will send funds directly to the vendor once invoiced. The bench will possibly be located on the WPAW Campus.

- d. C. Fox has implemented a new outreach campaign with a test school (Hope Valley Elementary) utilizing flyers for programs targeted to elementary school kids. WPAW will provide the school with printed flyers that will go home with K-5 students. We will see if enrollment in programs increase before looking to expand the campaign to other schools.
- e. The Hopkinton building inspector completed final inspection on the WPAW Welcome Center and a Cert. of Occupancy is expected from the town within a week.
- f. As an extension of our collaboration via RI Foundation's Initiative for Non-Profit Excellence, Chris is meeting with EDs of other agencies (RINHS and Woonasquatucket Watershed) to explore working together further and possibly applying for a joint grant from the RI Foundation.
- g. White Rock is moving forward. Chris is meeting with the bidding contractors tomorrow. He is still not sure if it will go forward next year due to the aggressive project schedule driven by the short funding window.

3. Fund Development Committee Report - Alan

- a. Bloomerang is up and running and they are learning the system.
- b. Annual Appeal donations are slowly coming in and is around the \$7,000 mark. More funds will likely come in during January, as has been the case in years past. We expect to hit the \$12,000 mark like last year. All giving is being entered into Bloomerang.
- c. The committee met a couple of weeks ago to look at points in the strategic plan that can be used to draw new members and donations. Board members will be asked to review the results and submit pictures to highlight. A small amount of promotional flyers will be printed to target a small audience.

4. Work Plan– Status and Amendments - Chris

- a. No major adjustments have been made yet. The recent congressional approval of implementing a formal Wild and Scenic study could have an impact on the 2015 Work Plan. The Wild and Scenic implementation schedule depends on availability of funds in 2015 from the National Park Service. It is expected that a cooperative agreement will be in place by April/May. We may have to take \$14,000 out of the approved 2015 WPAW budget if the NPS does not have the funding.
 - We may not have the funds to pay a staffer to do all the work associated with Wild and Scenic.
 - We should probably just do the best we can without expecting full implementation due to budgetary constraints.

5. Budget – Chris

- a. Income is low and expenses are high so a conservative approach to the budget was used.
- b. It is likely that the 2015 Work Plan and Budget will have to be amended throughout the year as external forces change.
- c. Denise will now be taking Chris's place as the lead WPWA staffer on the Sandy Grant: Flood Resiliency Management Plan in order to coordinate it with the Wild and Scenic Watershed Management Plan.
- d. There is \$14,000 budgeted for Wild and Scenic and they are on a Federal Fiscal Year so funds will have to be spent by Sep. 30.
- e. Pete suggested that the URI Coastal Institute may be a possible partner in Wild and Scenic indicating that their director expressed an interest in participating. Chris would like to see a cooperative agreement in place before funds are used from the Coastal Institute. He would be ok using funds to get the cooperative agreement set.
- f. There is currently a shortfall of \$11,000 in the DRAFT 2015 WPWA Budget. We have three annual sources of unrestricted income:
 - Membership – Appx \$6000
 - Annual Appeal - Appx \$12,000
 - Fund Development - Appx \$14,000
- g. There is usually a deficit at the end of the year as funds come in during late December and January next year as a result of donations and the annual appeal. From an accounting perspective we cannot carry funds over.
- h. However, there is appx \$12,000 in the budget for depreciation. Pete explains this is a “funny money” figure that does not represent a real expense. This will remain as part of the budget to serve as a contingency that will offset the \$11K shortfall.
- i. Areas that could use additional funding include Training, Education and Travel.
- j. A discussion by line item took place.
- k. Alan motioned we approve the budget. Mal 2nd. Approved

6. Fishing and Boating Registration Legislation

New Fishing and boating legislation is being drafted in RI. The new requirement for registration of an event has changed from a minimum of 3 boats and 6 people to 10 boats. When too many people with watercraft show up at an access point, they become blocked. In addition, the time frame to register is changing. The Board Agrees that WPWA should respond at the staff level with formal comments on the RIDEM regulation change.

7. The next meeting will focus on Water Quality Monitoring, the cost and what we get out of it.

8. Adjourn 9:10pm

Minutes submitted electronically by Jennifer MacKenzie and Chris Fox