

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2020 – Online via Zoom

Attendees: Jacques Couture, Russ Ford, Ellen Fox, Carol Hickey, John Little, Jim MacCartney, Bethany Remmers, Cynthia Scott, Wendy Scott, Dan Seeley, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting called to order at 6:31 with a brief hello and check-in.

Review of the April minutes: WS motioned; DS and CH seconded; minutes were approved as written.

Storm Impact Grants: Discussed the four applications that we received from towns, totaling requests of \$20,000. Some concerns about projects, and some requests for more details. Lindsey will work with the towns to be sure all projects are aligned with state requirements. CH moves to approve the grants, with the mentioned provisions for state permitting, etc. WS seconds; all in favor.

Still have extra funds in this pot – discussion about offering a second round (but timing is tight); some project costs could increase if state permitting issues/concerns. Our grant is on the lower end for town and road projects – in the future, more efficiency for larger grants. More discussion about offering additional dollars to these projects if additional flood resilience. DS motions to allocate extra funds for each of the projects, with Lindsey having the discretion to “improve” the projects as needed – if no other inputs, then split the funds evenly between the applicant towns. CS seconds; all in favor.

River Community Grants Update: All the funded projects plan to proceed as best they can this year. A few have asked for extension/amendments. The Arvin A Brown Library requests to have the funds wrap into next summer, so they can hopefully offer spring programming next year. The Vermont River Conservancy asks for a potential extension so they can work with VHC to provide a better easement plan for the McKay parcel near Big Falls. The Green Mountain Club asks to reallocate their funds to more trail maintenance due to increased use this year, rather than extending the Jay Peak-specific trail projects. WS motions to approve these amendments, CH seconds; all in favor.

Projects: NFCT will repair Davis Park steps in June, also will do updates/upgrades at Doe Camp. They are thankful for the reallocation of the \$1,500 that would have supported the Paddle/Pedal, and will use it for stewardship work in our area, or to promote family paddling on the Missisquoi.

Signage: Montgomery, Westfield, and Troy are all going to install signs; Lindsey will get posts to the towns once those arrive. No response about Boston Post Rd (Enosburg). Bethany says we can likely include this sign in the new Rail Trail plan.

Mill Brook has USACE clearance and work can begin in June; will aim for mid-month. Jim will see if he can be on-site to supervise the work.

Events: Discussion of whether to hold any of our planned 2020 events. Paddle and Picnic: obviously not hold June 6th; let's revisit the idea of holding one later in the summer during our June meeting. No W&S Gathering this year; what shall we do with the funds that would have gone to this? Different outreach activities? Donate to another organization that is doing outreach? Will continue this discussion. Also hold out for the idea of an adult overnight paddle in August. River Explorers Camp – seems like a liability. CS motions, WS seconds to not hold this year; all in favor. September 12th clean-up – seems like something that can be organized within safety guidelines. Other ideas: scavenger hunt along the river. Highlight the Rail Trail. Enosburg boats? Family river scavenger hunt. Family river trips; day trips; day camp? Guided paddle-pedal – weekly trip that Keith leads? More discussion of these potentials during our June meeting.

Other: Marriner property has resubmitted an application for similar bank stabilization work to what is being done at Mill Brook – Jim is doing the Sec. 7 review.

Upcoming meetings: June 18 – outside somewhere – Montgomery Pavilion? Meeting ended at 8:17pm.