

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, December 16, 2021 – Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Cynthia Scott, Jamie Fosburgh, Carol Hickey, Dan Seeley, Jacques Couture, Sarah Lunn, and Lindsey Wight.

Greetings; catching up; call to order: Meeting called to order at 6:32 PM.

Review of November Minutes: Thanks to Wendy and Sarah for these! DS moves to accept the minutes. CS seconded. Minutes were approved.

River Community and Town Infrastructure Grants

● **2021 grants update:**

- Montgomery Center for the Arts – final report for Take Me To The River art workshops.
 - Series of four workshops that the MRBA helped cofund. Well-attended and unique; allowed us to form new relationships with MCA and they have said they are interested in more community events
- The town of Westfield completed their Loop Road culvert replacement (Town Infrastructure).
 - Finished their culvert and sent in before and after photos. They have applied for another grant funding to replace an additional culvert that is very close to the river
- Jeff Parsons: Historic Mill Research Grant, asked for an extension for his grant. Asked for the end of March to submit the report. CH motioned to vote letting him have the extension. CS seconded. Vote to extend the deadline to March was accepted.

● **2022 Town Infrastructure Grants:**

Received just 2 applications requesting \$10,000. Westfield requested funds to continue replacing the small culverts on Loop Rd. Richford requested funds to continue stone-lining ditches. CH motioned to accept both applied grants. CS seconded. Motion passed.

Have \$30,000 to grant out but with only two applications, we have \$20,000 of unused funds to decide to use.

Options for unrequested Town Infrastructure grant funds:

- Fund additional River Community Grants
- Allow a second round of Town Infrastructure grant applications (Troy would apply; the previous deadline fell at a time when their road foreman wasn't able to submit. Lindsey had reached out to Berkshire and they didn't have a ready project in mind)
- Allocate some funds to help kickstart the Sampsonville Dam Remnant Removal.

DS motions to reserve \$10,000 for further Town Infrastructure Grants to reopen to the towns; CH seconded; motion approved. Motion to allocated \$5,000 to fund an additional river community grant (next in line is the Mussel Inventory), and the remaining \$5,000 to start the process of Sampsonville Dam Removal is tabled until the next meeting. LW will reopen the infrastructure grants to the towns again, but not extend it to Richford or Westfield in fairness to the other towns.

Other Projects:

- Troy Bridge survey closed 12/15. We were able to get around 20% of the town for the survey (232 responses; 1146 registered voters in town). We have not finished compiling the survey, but it looks overwhelmingly towards keeping the covered bridge. We will submit the responses to the town select board for their January meeting.
- Other W&S Rivers in VT?
Recent conversations about possible pursuits in the Winooski area in Central VT. Also progress in the Nulhegan in considering pursuing a Study. UMATR (Lindsey) has been asked to write a letter of support for this Nulhegan effort.

Monthly Meeting Speaker Series:

- January: Michael Lew-Smith (Mussel Survey)
- February:
- March: Jeff Parsons (Historic Mills)
- April:
Lindsey and Sarah will pursue other folks for Feb and April – one of our goals of this is to recruit interested parties to serve as Committee members.

Other 2022 events:

Hope to get something out at the beginning of the year about our 2022 events.

- Snowshoes Along The River with our County foresters
Franklin County: February 5th, 2-4 PM with Nancy Patch. Location TBD, though Brownway is always a good backup.
Orleans County: March 12th with Jared Nunnery. Couture's property again? Or a more riverside spot? Lindsey and Sarah will finalize locations next month.
- Paddle and Picnic – set date?
Sometime in June or August? The Paddle-Pedal event will be on July 16th. So let's do Sunday, June 12th for the Paddle and Picnic.
- Other paddle events (Explorers trip, youth day paddles, guided tours with naturalists, ANM-war canoe trips?, paddle instruction/lesson then tour – multi-level?)
 - Explorers trip? The challenges from last year may indicate that it's time to try something new with our week-long program. We will put out a bid seeking a plan for a youth week related to the river, and see what we get.
 - Youth day paddles - Last year's attendance was pretty good. Not in our budget right now; was originally offered in place of the explorers trip. Will offer again this year if we are able to afford it – Lindsey will comb through the budget.
 - Paddle Instructions/Lesson then tour - One in July and one in August; hope for good weather/water levels. Can offer one being a beginner and one being more difficult, depending on the sign-ups. Maybe a JL run-the-rapids course?
 - Guided tours with naturalists - LW would like to get the ANM Voyager canoe ride in the beginning of the year for a naturalist tour. Maybe get a birder to get identification while down the river. Possibly in May so that we have an event for every month.
 - "Big event"? W&S Solstice? W&S Gathering at Big Falls? W&S Film Fest?

- JC suggested the film festival because of the high attendance the last time we hosted. LW said it is about \$1100-\$1300 (with Jay Peak donating the theater). Recouped only about \$600 back. But we don't do it as a fundraiser. CH supports doing the film fest, and offering it in the fall - September?

FY 2023 Budget – continue to refine

LW share a rough draft. Currently same grant amounts, but perhaps we could increase that? We do have an increase in phone and internet from \$300 - \$900. Rent has also increased. Bookkeeping services are not included, but hopefully we will get some bookkeeping assistance. There is budget for special projects (i.e. Troy covered bridge, river improvement projects – Sampsonville?). Prior to the next meeting, Lindsey will share our 2021 financials, so we can see what we spent and where things may be able to be moved around.

Other/Public Comment

- Susan Staples is moving back to Richford and will be re-joining us next year hopefully!
- JC suggested holding the potluck in the spring where we can be outside due to COVID.

Upcoming Meeting: January 20 via Zoom.

Wrap up and Adjourn: CS made a motion to adjourn, CH seconded. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned at 8:26 pm.