

Meeting Minutes Thursday, November 5th, 2020: Bakersfield Fire Station, Bakersfield

Attendees: Cynthia Scott, Paul Stanley, Ari Lattanzi, Lindsey Wight; Wendy Scott, John Little, and Brian Jerose joined via Zoom.

- 1) Greetings – **Meeting called to order at 7:06pm.**
- 2) Review of October meeting minutes – **JL motions; CS seconds; all in favor.**
- 3) Administrative business – **Cynthia went over our Quarter Three financial report. Paul asked how QuickBooks was working. Cynthia and Lindsey report that it's working well; will be able to coordinate QuickBooks for tracking, even without a shared server. Could upgrade to a server if we need – we have 3 licenses for QB. Brian made a motion to accept the report, John seconded. All in favor.**

4) Outreach/Projects

Edible Rain Garden – **Ari is keeping tabs on this; she has been able to partner with Green Mountain Farm to School and use the Rainfall simulator for instruction in schools (Jay/Westfield and Troy). She has modified it to show even more uses for different soil conditions. Ari reported that it may be harder to access the schools with colder weather and increases in COVID cases. She may be making a video for schools to use. She reported that the teachers have been very receptive and appreciative.**

Bugworks – **the initial video is available on our website – along with some resources, and we have footage for the second, more in-depth look. Needs completion.**

Richford Stormwater Project – **hired Watersheds Consulting to do this; will result in preliminary design. JL offered to talk with Scott Coons (Richford Road Commissioner) about this and any other Richford projects.**

Conservation easement/stormwater project development conversations in Enosburg – **Sampsonville Dam and Lawyer's Landing: collaborating with Northern Forest Canoe Trail on these. WS mentioned that Enosburg Conservation Commission may be able to be of assistance (conservation fund).**

Tree Planting 2021 – **\$25,000 from Woody Buffer Block Grant (DEC through WUV); will be used in Troy where a strong group of partners (VAAF, VLT, USFWS) on a big conservation effort along Coburn Brook and the Missisquoi. Also, VLT reached out about 3 acres on Randall's farm in Lowell – will also do, if additional funds can be secured.**

2020 plantings – will continue to check up on. Must have 75% success rate at Magnan's; initial visits look good. Paul will keep eyes on the Westcom planting; will be good to monitor that one, too.

Mapping – **Ari has been starting on some maps for/of the watershed; has been a bit confused about the river miles. 25 in Orleans County, 15 in Canada, then 48 to the wildlife refuge – does that sound right? This has it end at the refuge; why? Thoughts: perhaps due to lake levels; the river level here changes with the lake? Board suggests that Ari "add" river miles through the delta.**

Lindsey and Ari are looking into purchasing ArcGIS to continue being better able to make maps.

Water Sampling – **Ellen Fox has been collecting water samples at the Wright Farm. Paul reported that the Wright's called and asked about the results. Great engagement! The benefits of this type of sampling: quick results, no reporting to the State – encouraging; supports continuing this hands-on method.**

Ellen is still collecting; then will finalize results. She will check in with the Wright's on 11/6/20. Paul and Ellen will both meet with the Wrights at a later date.

5) Grants/financials update

LCBP grants – Applied for LCBP Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention funds to do Japanese knotweed control efforts – should hear in December?

CVNHP Local Heritage Grant – **Abenaki connections and education. Ari has been in touch with both the Missisquoi tribe (Swanton; chief Richard Menard) and the Nulhegan tribe (Barton; chief Don Stevens); also Circle of Courage (youth program in Swanton), and Jeff Benay, with Franklin County Indian Education. Will be looking for projects that could uplift Abenaki. We are trying to see what they recommend; one thing we could do is hire someone to help finding out about place names and eventually installing signs along the river. Timeline is long – projects won't start until next fall. Will see other funds to amplify Abenaki relationship with the river in the meantime (LCBP E&O?).**

There was a person at the W&S designation event that spoke about Abenaki. Perhaps from UMass? John will see if he can find the info; Shana may know.

VCF funding for ECO AmeriCorps! – We received a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation that will help to cover the MRBA's cost of hosting Ari. Will continue to seek some project-related funds, but the direct cost is covered.

Lindsey also had a conversation with Nina from VAAFM, about the continued need for support in the form of our ECO AmeriCorps member (we had received a 2-year grant from them to cover our costs, but this was pulled due to the pandemic). Nina understands our continued need.

- 6) **Other Comments – Paul reported a big stormwater project in Bakersfield: The septic system and the storm drains have been connected. The project will de-couple the two systems from each other, which will be great for the Tyler Branch.**

Lindsey brought up that the Franklin County Conservation District has done an interview with Daton. She will send around the link to the Vt. Association of Conservation Districts website that houses the interview.

Brian noted that the Fairfield Outdoor Classroom got out canoeing on Black Creek!

- 7) **Next meeting – December 3, 2020 – Hybrid – socially distant BYO meal at Bakersfield FD; and Zoom?
January 7, 2021 – thoughts?
February 4, 2021 – we'll see?**
- 8) **Adjourn – PS motioned; BJ seconded; All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:27pm.**