

Meeting Minutes Thursday, August 6th, 2020: MRBA office, East Berkshire

Attendees: Cynthia Scott, Paul Stanley, Wendy Scott, Mike Manahan, Ranier Lucas, Meg Rossie, Lindsey Wight; Karen Bates and Brian Jerose joined via Zoom.

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 7:02pm; Lindsey acknowledged both Ranier and Meg for their help with projects, dealing with the pandemic, and keeping a good positive attitude all the while!
- 2) Review of July meeting minutes – WS motions; MM seconds; all in favor.
- 3) Tactical Basin Planning – **We'll be undergoing the update for our TBP for the next year and a half. There will be an Agricultural Work Group, focused on promoting BMPs and identifying acres expected and what practice is best suited; this group will be shaped by this fall. There will also be more modeling – check out the Basin 5 StoryMap (Lindsey will send around the link). Another emphasis will be on our priority areas – highlighting the areas that we want to continue to protect; that are in good shape.**

Ways we can help: where to focus outside of Ag – help prioritize problems. Also call out pristine areas – send these to Karen. A few problem areas were mentioned: Sampsonville Brook. PS says perhaps it's time to move on from bandaids like cover crops/buffers/no till and focus on more nutrient management plans – and implementing them; need financial support for these efforts – and also more inspectors. Lots of turnover with inspectors results in lag time between farm visits. Also our roads are badly impacted by flooding and sediment. Bakersfield definitely needs more money to fix roads.

There is a private roads erosion evaluation app being developed that will score – used initially for forest roads.

New this year: there is funding to do the Tactical Basin Planning, so Lindsey and Ellen will work to engage more folks – perhaps through literature that can be left at town offices, or even at homes. A concern: people feel that planning is not constructive – money going into this, but nothing ever comes of it. Need to highlight that work DOES happen.

- 4) Administrative business

Q2 Report – Cynthia gave a synopsis of this.

ECO AmeriCorps – **Our new ECO member, Ari, will start with us Sept 14. She will be living in Fairfield.**

Mini-newsletter? – Lindsey will send digitally to those whose emails we have and via regular mail to the rest. Lindsey would like to get this out before September, so will likely be seeking final approval from the Board digitally.

- 5) Outreach/Projects

Our River Clean-Up was a beautiful and successful day.

Projects and Programs update – Lindsey went over our current projects and programs. Many things going on; super nice to still be busy through these weird times.

Upcoming – **Willow harvest volunteer workday August 22? Bank Stabilization work will be happening Aug 24-26. CS and WS can help – 9 or 10am?**

- 6) Grants/projects update

Tactical Basin Planning funds: **As mentioned earlier, there is funding for this work – a better way to reach people than just saying “there's a public meeting”.**

River Network/NPS fund: **Community Watershed Science – Adopt-A-Site program and water sampling.**

Longley Bridge Project Design funds: **Contract with someone to do initial design.**

VCF funds: **Lindsey will apply for funds to cover ECO AmeriCorps member.**

Other ideas/target for Ben & Jerry's funds?

Bookkeeping – more fiscal agent funds from W&S, so may increase our financial management assistance. Concern: W&S money; does MRBA need to match?

- 7) Events – **No need to try to do fall events. Education programs with homeschool pods? Or via zoom?**

- 8) Next meeting – September 3, 2020 – **outside somewhere?**
October 1, 2020 – **MRBA office?**
November 5, 2020 – **location?**

- 9) Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.