

Meeting Minutes Thursday, April 2nd, 2020: Zoom Meeting – <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/736131943>

Attendees: Cynthia Scott, Paul Stanley, John Little, Wendy Scott, Tom Bryce, Brian Jerosse, Ranier Lucas, and Lindsey Wight

- 1) Meeting was called to order at **7:02pm with a check-in about everyone's wellbeing under this new reality.**
- 2) Review of March meeting minutes – **JL motions; CS seconds; all in favor.**
- 3) Administrative business

Board Elections: CS nominates John Little, Wendy Scott, and Brian Jerosse to serve an additional 3-year term, and for Wendy to continue as Secretary and John to continue as President. BJ seconds, all in favor. Brodie Haenke is also at the end of his 3-year term; Lindsey has not heard if he is interested in continuing to serve.

Lindsey went over the applicants for the Project Manager position. We received 12 applications. Lindsey will send the top five candidates to the selection committee (JL, PS, WS, and TB) and they will help narrow it down for interviews. PS suggests that FWC is still looking for an administrative coordinator, and applicants that are not selected could be told about that opportunity.

The UMATR Committee's budget for next year (FY21) is being sent in for NPS approval; in consultation with the NPS representative and interested in making things equitable across the Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers, the fiscal agent fee, which is paid to the MRBA, is being increased to 10% of the UMATR budget. These funds could be used to hire a bookkeeper, instead of relying on our wonderful treasurer to do everything. The funding increase will not apply until October, so we have time to discuss.

- 4) Grants/projects update

Lindsey went over our current grants and projects (MRBA Programs 2020). We have funds remaining in our Woody Buffer Block Grant as well as from Pur Projet to plant the 1800 stems that we have coming this spring. Discussion about how to plant safely under the threat of Covid-19. Some professional crews are allowed – we could hire Redstart to do at least part of our planting. Budget discussion; decided to contract Redstart to plant up to 1000 trees; Ranier, Lindsey, and interested Board members will plant the other – with strict guideline for contact avoidance.

Pur Projet funds come with steeper survival requirements – could use spray to knock back the weeds. Discussion of other methods (brush mats? Mulch?). Take our time; plant well; and stay safe.

Other grants not that likely to be majorly impacted by Covid-19: design projects, although contacting landowners could prove more difficult. A few grants have outstanding contracts. Our outreach and education programs (especially with schools) will have to be altered/adjusted – more discussion to come.

Proposed projects include the High Meadows Fund resiliency project – Lindsey has a meeting scheduled for April 14th and a VCF Spark grant to map the public lands in our watershed and create brochures.

- 5) Outreach/Projects

Tree plantings for 2020 – Discussed above. Will aim to plant later this month in Sheldon. 1800 stems total/~ 6 acres.

Education/Outreach – More online content. Board approves seeing if Kurt will produce a brief video for Bugworks. Ranier will create “teaser” videos of our educational programs that can be on our website. He is also seeking “greening while social distancing” videos from community members.

- 6) Events

Annual Forum – Let's cancel this year's, rather than try to have it another time. Add an educational component to the BGABGA event. This event is slated for August 13th. It will be hard to get corporate sponsors under the current situation (both talking to people and the financial concerns), so Lindsey will see if she can find a creative solution. Paul brought up that June Dairy Days has been canceled – there

could be Dairy Promotion funds available, if we theme it around Dairy. Dairy Promotion has this goal: exemplify community and how dairy fits into our community – also highlight the frontline folks and celebrate their heroism.

River Clean-Up with AmeriCorps group in June? **If they still do their overnight, where should we collect trash? BJ suggests that Berkshire-Enosburgh is a lovely section to paddle – but may need to be closer to the Lake for commuting purposes. John’s Bridge on Rte 7? But we did that 2 years ago... We’ll table this until we get closer/have a better sense of if it may happen.**

Annual River Clean-Up in Westfield – **July 18th. Hopefully we’ll be able to do this.**

7) Next meeting – May 7, 2020 – **Likely to still be online; is this format ok with folks?**

June 4, 2020 – **MRBA office?**

July 2, 2020 – **MRBA office – or BBQ?**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35.