

Meeting Minutes Thursday, May 6th, 2021: Montgomery Pavillion

Attendees: Paul Stanley, Ellen Fox, Cynthia Scott, Wendy Scott, Lindsey Wight, Craig Cimmons, John Little, Ari Lattanzi, Brian Jerose

- 1) So nice to see everyone in person! Meeting was called to order at 7:14
- 2) Review of April meeting minutes – J.L. made a motion to accept, C.S. seconded; all in favor
- 3) Finances: 2021 Q1 report – Cynthia reviewed our finances after the first quarter of 2021. We also discussed land acknowledgements, and the idea of doing something formal to acknowledge the Abenaki during our events. Let's make a focus for this topic at another meeting – we should also gather stories from our historical societies to better understand the history of our watershed.

Funds for clean-up efforts? What funding is available to private landowners who have major trash dumps on their land? Lindsey said that the NW Solid Waste District has some funds to cover this – she will reach out to Barry Domina to find out more about these. Maybe Jamie Tibbits, too? Ellen mentioned that zoning laws require clean-ups before land transfers – perhaps we could work with town zoning to identify trash dumps on private lands along the rivers.

Sponsorship request from FNLC? Annual event will be virtual on Thursday May 27th. They are asking if we would sponsor the event for \$250. JL made a motion to donate \$250, WS seconded. Some discussion about whether or not we could ask to have a few minutes to say a few words in return for our “sponsorship” (haha!). All in favor. Lindsey will ask Kent about this possibility.

- 4) Newsletter update/membership drive – Amy Adams at NW Regional Planning said she could print our newsletter. We will need to fold the newsletters.
- 5) Programs and Projects update: discussion of ongoing and upcoming projects. Funds from Pur Projet – look into putting into a CD until we know if we need to replace trees (75% success required). Alternatively, order the trees now and ask the nurseries to “tag and hold” them for us? Westcom's trees may need some weeding this summer – LEAP interns? NRPC Project Development funds available; need to identify projects – could use to identify where the riverside dumps are? Lindsey will ask Karen, as projects must be pre-approved by her.

Select highlights: Knockout Knotweed event, QAPP progress – need to figure out how to haul mulch to the Franklin County sites, does anyone have a trailer, or know a landscaper whom we could hire? David Godet (sp?) could probably haul mulch. Mickey? Joe?

Plein Air Painting – very successful event. Another Plein Air event will be held Jun 5th. There will be a pottery event later in the summer, digging clay from the river bank and then later a Raku firing with an outside kiln.

Tree planting at Randall's (Lowell) – Help needed with tree planting, likely mid-month.

Tree planting need at O'Donnell's (Westfield) - Help needed with tree planting. Wed. 5/12, 11-2, Sunday 16th 1-4, Wed 5/19 1-4 set as tentative dates; will confirm with landowner and put the call out via email/social media. Suggested that we create a facebook group of volunteers, so we can easily connect with them when opportunities/needs arise.

Abenaki Nation Missisquoi event for July/August with LCBP E&O funds – down at the refuge. We'll assist when they pick a date.

North Troy Farm and Forest: Ellen discussed this land conservation project and her efforts and current status. We hope to find the right partners to fund the purchase and protection of ~3 miles of riverfront along the river including Big Falls. Land sovereignty – involve ANM and/or the Nulhegan band?

- 6) LEAP interns – hired two students, one from Richford and one from Troy. They will be implementing small-scale planting projects, checking on old projects (see Westcom note, above). Also they could check on/water/mulch/remove bind weed (could use their time as match for Brault's project).

LEAP program needs match dollars FOR this project, too: stewardship work alongside the Board?

- 7) ECO AmeriCorps Northern Gathering – May 21st The AmeriCorps folks will do some projects at the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi tribal headquarters, and a river cleanup in Swanton in the afternoon. Board assistance?
 - 8) Collaborative arts program: The Watershed Project – an opportunity fell in our laps to participate in encouraging art and connections between students and the river. Perhaps an opportunity to create cross-town connections – students between towns could become ‘penpals’?
 - 9) Events for 2021 – check in with planned events. Will check in at June meeting.
 - 10) Marking milestones: 25 years of MRBA (should we DO something to celebrate?), and thank you for 1 year of Project Managing, Ellen! We will celebrate at our annual BBQ at Paul and Linda’s house on July 1. Would be great to show a slideshow of old photos. Also need to recreate the photo at the planting across from AmeriGas.
 - 11) Other business?
 - 12) Next meeting – June 3, 2021 – location suggestions? Maybe Jay Peak?
- Meeting adjourned at 9:09pm.